University of Alberta

Magic in Contemporary Weddings: A Comparison of Ukrainian and Canadian-Ukrainian Beliefs and Practices

by

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Abstract

The present study on beliefs in, and use of magic, by Ukrainians living in Ukraine and Canada is contextualized in weddings. The main research methods are analysis of ethnographic literature and retrospective personal interviews with thirty five informants from both countries further subdivided into four groups: villagers, urban dwellers, divorced people, and clergy. The results of the study show that Ukrainians in Canada and Ukraine have different magical belief systems, or worldviews: magical in Ukrainians and anti-magical/materialistic in Canadian-Ukrainians. Ukrainian immigrants in Canada tend to know and believe in magical actions/objects during the weddings significantly less (if ever). The study suggests that magic beliefs are the most fragile part of the folklore complex transmitted to another country, while they tend to be well-preserved in the "maternal culture."

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In memory of my grandmothers,

Lukiia Kukharenko and Antonina Zurnadzhy,

and to all for whom magic is unrestricted

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Introduction

Ukrainian folklore and its transition from the Old Country to Canada have been studied quite intensely by scholars within the discourse of acculturation. The categories studied were primarily material culture and oral lore (narratives, songs, proverbs, jokes, etc). The function of magic – through folk beliefs, rituals, and omens - among modern Canadian Ukrainians, however, is reflected in a relatively small scope of literature on the immigrants' cultural complex. Magic beliefs are presented rather infrequently and mostly as remnants of the tradition in the Old Country. Klymasz (1992), a prominent researcher of Canadian-Ukrainian heritage, concentrated more on beliefs about a soul after death, wax-pouring, the evil eye in general, and dreams used in foretelling. But he did not specifically investigate magic beliefs in regards to the wedding ritual.

Folk culture is a complex multilayered phenomenon that includes both material and non-material elements. Magic is one of those non-material elements, and its study is a two-directional process: holistic studying of a folk culture implies studying magic beliefs, and on the other hand, as Lindquist (2006) stated, "the analysis of magical practices served to provide insights into the deep ontologies of culture, the structuring notions that organize its workings from micro to macro levels" (p. 3). Without studying magic beliefs and practices, a description of the culture (and hence of acculturation processes) would not be complete.

To understand the nature of acculturation and continuity and change of the folklore complex over time and space implies answering the questions: "What are the rules that govern the transition of the folklore complex? Does the magical world-view

manage to survive this transition?" Tracing continuity and change in the folklore complex is possible by comparing two groups with a common cultural root. Ukrainians both in Ukraine and in Canada are such groups. I will look at how much magic beliefs are a part of life of Ukrainians in both groups. The use of the issue of identity is important since "the definition of and identification with ethnic groups are often based on folklore...To participate in and identify with an ethnic group is to know and to be able to use its folklore" (Oring, 1984, p. 34).

Before analyzing the above mentioned groups, I will explore the theoretical approaches available for studying transition within the folklore complex and beliefs in particular. This topic has been studied by others with other ethnic groups who experienced similar migration.

Following Georges et al. (1995), beliefs are "transmissible entities" (p. 93). They can be uprooted together with their bearers and transferred into another cultural context. With the folklore genre I am about to discuss I employ Abrahams' (1976) scheme of conversational genres to which superstitions (along with charms, spells, and prayers) belong (p. 201). According to him, superstitions are a part of everyday discourse when speakers communicate spontaneously. Not only help they to explain man's relationship with the social, natural, and supernatural phenomena, but also influence them as well. Beliefs in the supernatural, then, conform to the rules of a folklore text, which is orally transmitted. As such, it has a tendency to dynamically change over time and space (i.e., to have variations) while retaining some traditional characteristics. My research enables a comparison of what Britsyna (2005) calls a "traditional competence and folklore memory" (p. 4). I will do such a comparison among tradition bearers living in two different

continents. As she states, "acquiring a traditional competence cannot take place through reading folkloric notes or even watching video recordings; it is the result of co-actions of the tradition bearers during the live folkloric process" (p.14). Continuity of magic tradition will be confirmed if Ukrainians in Canada (and Ukraine as well) possess magic beliefs and exercise magic actions that are described in scholarly sources detailing weddings of the past. Some folklore examples can be considered "survivals" in the sense that they are known or thought to have been more common during the past, and they seem more appropriate for the past than the present. New forms of folkloric expression go unnoticed because researchers utilizing the survivalistic framework assume that Old World folklore is the pure reflection of the ethnic tradition and that any change from that "ideal" state is a "demise" or a "contamination" (Stern, 1977, p. 12). I do not concentrate on survivals of Old World traditions but will consider assimilation and acculturation as reflected in the traditions or the changed nature and role of the traditions in their new environment. I argue that beliefs in the supernatural for Ukrainians are not survivals. They are not only believed to be true, but actively defended, disseminated, and shared among people. They exist not as mere habits of their bearers, or due to ignorance, or because of lack of critical thinking. My interviews with Ukrainians below the age 35 (most of whom have higher education) show that they maintain popular beliefs because they are meaningful for them and real.

An excellent example of research on a culture transformation done on the basis of folklore is Carla Bianco's (1974) *The Two Rosetos*. She describes and compares traditional values, worldviews, and cultural changes in the lives of three generations of Italian-Americans in Roseto, Pennsylvania with Italians in Roseto, Valfortore, Italy,

through the folktales, proverbs, religious customs, magic practices, and beliefs. Bianco spent twelve months recording numerous songs, tales, habits, superstitions, beliefs, and life histories in both communities. Her main purpose was to collect a "fully representative sampling of the Rosetan tradition and to use this sampling as a basis for the study of the process of adaptation of this rural group to American conditions" (p. xi). Since she was looking for representative examples of inter-ethnic contacts and immigrant's adjustment to American life, she rejected a "purely rural or isolated community" (p. xi). Her study is both synchronic and diachronic for she studied a group as a whole and paid the closest attention to the stories of individual immigrants. However, Bianco traced continuity and change in tradition through primarily linguistic elements of dialect and structure of texts. She concluded that songs had undergone the slowest process of transformation, while narratives presented the most visible changes. As far as beliefs are concerned, Bianco stressed that their changes are much more difficult to analyze, but she admitted that a lack of traditional rationale and context for their use in the New World became a reason for a decrease in their use even by the second generation of Italian immigrants. Among the factors preserving traditional beliefs and superstitions, Bianco names cultural cohesion of a community; isolation from the dominant culture and unwillingness to integrate into it; and time of immigration. Interestingly, she argues for a predominantly magical-religious worldview of Italian immigrants of the first generation.

There is a need to define the terms I am going to use: belief, superstition, magic, omen, magical world-view, religion. There are no absolute definitions; therefore, I am utilizing definitions that best reflect my own concepts.

Magic is an element of the folk belief system expressed through the oral narrative tradition. It implies manipulations of supernatural forces (Butler, 1990, p. 76). According to Butler, magical tradition includes three components: ritual act, formulaic expression, and magic artifact (p. 83). Magic is invariably recognized to be connected to the striving for power and control of power (Butler, 1990; Douglas, 1982; Lindquist, 2006; Paxson, 2005, and Wax et al., 1962).

Superstition – a folk belief about luck or successful completion of a specific task often associated with ritual behaviors (Pimple, 1990, p. 53). In everyday use, the word superstition usually has a "distinctly negative flavor and superstitious people are often thought to be primitive or ignorant" (Vyse, 1997, p. 18). Georges et al. distinguish between a sign superstition or omen (a condition "over which human beings have no control and which they regard and interpret"), magic superstitions which "sometimes prescribe that human beings may carry out to bring about a particular effect or result … and may also prescribe actions to be avoided because carrying them out will lead to negative consequences. … one may change things for the better by behaving in ways that bring good luck," and convention superstitions ("actions that one can take to avoid negative results that follow from the appearance or accidental creation of signs") (p. 97).

Beliefs are usually influenced by the social surroundings. Vyse makes a distinction between socially shared and personal superstitions, and emphasizes that there exist "traditionally superstitious groups" like miners, gamblers, soldiers, investors, etc. (p. 26) He states that superstitious behavior is a product of socialization, and traditional transmission of beliefs usually takes place through "direct instructions and social learning" (p. 155).

Magical world-view is applied to groups, not individuals, it is a "basic shared perception of the world of given people" (Pimple, p. 53). Since ethnic groups, as Oring states, "share and identify with a historically derived cultural tradition or style, which may be composed of explicit behavioral features as well as implicit ideas, values, and attitudes" (Oring, 1986, p. 24) it follows that beliefs fall under those implicit ideas that are a part of a cultural style shared and continued by certain ethnic groups.

Religion is made up of "beliefs," statements about the nature of the sacred, and "rites" or rules of conduct with respect to sacred things (Vyse, p. 9). The relationship between religious and magical beliefs is an extremely interesting aspect of cross-cultural comparison for my project. As Ryan (1999) states, "the 'Byzantine heritage' … brought on the back of Christianity a host of other un-Christian superstitious practices… And most of these…are fairly late importations by way of the South Slavs and one must conclude that the colporteurs were the clergy, who until quite recent times continued to be practitioners in magic and divination among the East and South Slavs, both Orthodox and Catholic" (p.14).

Immigrants bring to other countries their cultural baggage, i.e. the folklore that used to be a part of everyday life in the Old Country. To adapt themselves to the new realities, they often create cultural islands (Smidchens, 1990). However, Kriza (1984) insists that such cultural islands are impossible: what is being created is a "new cultural configuration, not a simple transformation" (p. 79). A large amount of literature on immigrants and displaced persons shows that they usually had to negotiate their identities within the dominant society. The result of that negotiation became a hybrid culture and

identity where a traditional form gained new content. This process is universal as demonstrated by scholars in regards to different ethnic groups.

This process is governed by the so-called Hansen's Law[1], which universally explains the different attitude in subsequent generations towards ethnic symbols and forms of cultural expression (Hansen, 1938). According to this Law, the first generation usually keeps faith in the folklore complex that is brought with them to another country while the pressure of assimilation and desire to enter the dominant society forces the second generation to negate the cultural baggage of the Old Country and to strive for mingling into the new cultural context. Then the third generation usually "goes back" to consciously preserve, revive, and value that baggage. Explaining the reasons for this, Smidchens writes about the third generations' characteristics:

> "...with time they are not immigrants any more, they seek ways to express their ethnic identity though folklore as a symbol of ethnic heritage...They value objects for their ethnic symbolism. Immigrants at first maintain the folklore of their homeland because they have no choice... Folklore does, however, take on a new, sentimental attachment to the homeland, or solidarity with other members of the ethnic group" (p. 134).

Voigt confirms that "it is also a common-place that in those countries where many nationalities live together, ethnic heritage has a symbolic value. ... ethnic qualities appear first during the process of assimilation into the so-called "melting pot" of the society of many ethnic groups, and then again in the period of the separation from it" (Voigt, 1999, p. 221).

Smidchens tries to investigate what kinds of folklore "items" do survive transfer to the New Country and are used as symbols of ethnic identity. He found out that "music, song, and dance are the most popular symbols" (p. 135). His conclusions seem to be

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[1]Hansen's Law of generational change was stated by the historian Marcus Lee Hansen, who called it "the principle of third generation interest": "What the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember."

confirmed by other scholars. Opler (1950) studied folk beliefs and practices among Japanese-Americans in Tule Lake, California, during 1943-1946 and then during 1946-1949 he interviewed the same informants. He concluded that some behaviors and practices vanished because they were no longer relevant or appropriate for the time, the place, or the expectations of others, and no longer served as the means for anxiety reduction. Explaining why behaviors that were traditional in rural Japan rarely appeared among immigrants or their American-born children he stated that "conditions of life had changed and with them culturally rooted beliefs. They have served their purpose and they died a natural death" (p. 397).

The vanishing of traditional magic beliefs and superstitions among Ukrainian immigrants was admitted by Lesoway (2002) only in regards to ritual bread: "As Ukrainian settlers in Alberta prospered, they could afford to be nonchalant about superstitions and folk beliefs, and many such practices became obsolete" (p. 254). Stern (1977) states that any "normal trend of acculturation favors the "loss" of Old World folkloric elements" (p. 17). This "loss" seems to be unavoidable. Obviously any old beliefs and rituals become irrelevant in a new surrounding. Douglas (1982) emphasizes that "they no longer have meaning because the social action in which they inhered no longer exists…So the more social change, the more radical revision of cosmologies…and the more denigration of ritual" (p.145).

Klymasz (1992), talking about the "inability of certain Old Country folk beliefs (concerning, for example, certain evil supernatural entities) to re-establish outside the country of origin" (p. 61), illustrates that radical change in Ukrainian immigrants. According to him, exposure to the "new magic" of the industrialized world such as the

radio, gramophones, automobiles, tractors, etc., also played its role since "the magic of these appliances probably overshadowed the once potent powers of assorted Old Country supernatural forces, spirits, and entities" (p. 61).[2]

The vanishing of magical beliefs, then, is rather the rule. At the same time, some special circumstances give rise to a revival of Old World folkloric expression. It may mean then that Ukrainian magic beliefs fail to survive outside of the country exactly because they cannot serve as symbols for ethnic identity in the new place. Presumably the "locus control" of ethnic groups in a multi-ethnic environment is external, i.e. "ethnic folklore may not only serve symbolic purposes for those within the group, they may be deliberately manipulated as symbols of ethnic identity for those outside the group" (Oring, 1986, p. 37). As Carpenter (1979) says, "the minority-group traditions which are exposed to the larger populace have, therefore, been the more entertaining and usually less essential or central traditions of the old culture" (p. 374). Voigt (1999) provides a good explanation for the process of selection of ethnic symbols: "...ethnic symbols are mostly formulated by the outsiders, the members of the receivers, and not by the members of the "we"-group, the senders of the message" (p. 236).

Talking about the specificity of Hungarian identity, Degh (1984) writes that "over the past 20 years, a new element has been added to identity reconstruction: the desire for renewed connections with the Old Country... The concept of Hungarian identity for the new generation is completely different. It is a matter of individual choice..." (p. 196)

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[2] Klymasz used the same "retrospective interviews" method that is used in my research. He questioned mainly old people about the times they were children and youths. In this respect, I believe my method is reliable since the chronological distance between the dates of my interviews and the inquired events is smaller.

Therefore, if individual identity is subject to conscious choice, then folklore may become subject to conscious (or unconscious) selection for the sake of preservation and expression of group ethnic identity. The most vivid or the best symbols such as songs (that have almost untouched continuity), or dances, are usually used for that purpose and tend to be revived. Degh adds that conscious revival of past traditions for the sake of ethnic identity usually has organized forms like patriotic celebrations, dance ensembles, language courses, sending children to scout-camps, etc.

Sklute (1971) analyzes folklore collected in New Sweden, Maine in the 1960s, comparing it with material found in Swedish archives. She investigates the fate of folklore uprooted from its original locale by examining changes in folk beliefs expressed in the legendary narratives of Swedish-Americans. She aimed to see what beliefs were retained and transmitted to American-born Swedes, to the second and subsequent generations, and to understand what factors – historical, psychological, social, or geographical – affected the process of change along with acculturation. Collecting interviews during summer visits conducted from 1964 through 1967 she mostly looked at attitudes towards the beliefs her interviewees expressed in their narratives, but never asked them directly about beliefs. She concluded that the second generation, becoming educated, rejected old beliefs most:

> The discovery that the sharpest break-off in emphasis and size of repertoires and, to some extent, in attitudes, does not take place between immigrants and non-immigrants, but between the 2A <second generation> and the subsequent generations may indicate that it is at this point that the strongest shift in cultural orientations takes place. The shift is from orientation essentially directed toward the culture and values of the Old Country to one concerned with those of the community in the adapted country (p. 181).[3]

[3] Sklute supports the reliability of her own conclusions referring to Haugen, who found a similar break-off in linguistic behavior and value orientations in Norwegian-Americans of the second generation (In Haugen, Einar. *The Norwegian Language in America.* 1953, Vol.2, p. 334)

Sklute further implied that "in a 'slow-moving' peasant society which has undergone few pressures of acculturation and in which many people share the folk beliefs, a legend may have fewer functions than in a faster moving culture which has undergone acculturative changes" (p. 5).

At this point, there appears the logical question of whether it is legitimate to compare transformation of Ukrainian beliefs in Canada with what was left at home, given the obvious pressures for acculturation in Canada versus the "slow-moving" peasant society of Ukraine. According to Noll et al. (1999), Ukrainian civil society faced a very dramatic transformation so that some elements of its cultural complex were changed or completely lost. Pressure for other kinds of acculturation was so intense and forceful that Ukrainian villagers at times paid with their freedom or even their lives for refusing to accept the values and ideology of the new, Soviet, state. They were ridiculed and persecuted for religious beliefs as much as for the magic ones and for maintaining their own, Ukrainian, identity. Therefore, I believe that comparison between Ukrainian and Canadian cultural settings is possible and legitimate.

All the abovementioned considerations allow me to state the hypotheses for my project: 1) Canadian Ukrainians, unlike Ukrainians in Ukraine, do not possess a magical worldview; 2) Canadian Ukrainians have a *conscious* desire to maintain Old Country's folk traditions in regards to the wedding ceremony; 3) their knowledge of the folk tradition is theoretical; 4) magical actions and beliefs are present at Ukrainian Canadian weddings but with reduction of magical elements; and 5) there is a negative attitude toward magic beliefs in Ukrainian immigrants, especially within the second generation.

Chapter 1: Ukrainian Wedding Within the Folk Culture

1.1. Magic as a worldview

Magic is a part of everyday life in Ukraine. The authors of numerous books and articles on sorcery and witches (Bogatyrev (1929), Hnatiuk (1912), Kononenko (1998), Ryan (1999), and others) show that this concept has been taken seriously in Ukraine. Manifestations of magical thinking are present in all levels of social life and among various social strata. For example, people would not shake hands across the threshold to avoid misfortune. Lending of one's household belongings is prohibited after the sunset for the fear of evil forces. The first person to enter a house in the morning of the Old New Year Day (January 14) should be a male to bring luck to the household and family. An identical requirement exists for an empty train carriage to ensure good luck for duration the trip. Taxi drivers keep blessed poppy heads near the car windscreen to ensure safe trips. Merchants in the markets wipe their goods with the paper money given by the very first buyer in the morning to ensure they will sell all their merchandise by the end of the day. Relatives and friends spit three times on a newborn baby and avoid words of praise or admiration, as well as showing it off to others, so as to avoid the baby receiving the evil eye. Many people wear safety pins in their garments or various amulets to protect themselves from the evil forces, etc.

Frazer (1963 [1890]) described magic practices as the lower forms of savage mentality. It does not seem to be true that magical beliefs are the result of an unenlightened mind. My personal interviews and observations make me rather share Vyse's conclusion: "education does not make one immune to superstitious beliefs" (p.

39). In 2005, my hostess in Kyiv, a 30 year old successful professor of history always carried a little bit of salt blessed on Easter with her as a means of protection against the evil eye. My male acquaintance from Kyiv, a 43 year old respectable museum worker gave me serious advice on how to stop an unwanted person from coming to my house with the help of, again, blessed salt. Those two examples are not exceptions from the rule but rather illustrate the rule itself.

The evil eye is a special matter of concern for Ukrainians. It is perceived as an active agent able to harm or even kill, and much effort is expended into defending one's own life and family, businesses, and material belongings against it. This particular belief seems to be relatively universal (Dundes, 1984) and Ukrainians certainly attest this belief as well. People in Ukraine do believe in witches and wizards as those who posses special power through secret knowledge inaccessible to the majority. Witches are usually accused of all kinds of misfortunes and diseases that seem to have no logical explanation otherwise. In Ukrainian villages, they are said to take away milk from cows or cause certain meteorological phenomena like hail or drought. And they are believed to be capable of taking away health, sucking off life energy to the point that the victim dies, sending spells on those whom they do not like, and casting the evil eye on little children. Since witches look like usual people they can normally only be detected if they display some "suspicious" behavior. Traditionally, Ukrainian agrarian society values "sameness" or "evenness" which is very important for maintaining a fine balance inside the relatively isolated communities. Therefore, anything that makes a person stand out becomes a reason for accusation of being a witch (Kononenko, 1998; cf Butler, 1990, p. 63). Among such "recognizable traits" can be extreme success; unjustified wealth; active interest in

small children or others people's business; overly enthusiastic praise of anything or anyone, etc. People's attitudes towards a possessor of magical power are two-fold. On the one hand, witches are feared and hated since they may cause harm. On the other hand, people can live side by side with them all their lives, ask the witches for favors, or to undo another witch's harm, etc.

The secret knowledge of magical protection (or aggression, as in the case of witches) is deeply respected by Ukrainians. Prescriptions and taboos for everyday life are passed on by a word of mouth inside the family and with friends, and treated seriously. As Passin et al. (1965) put it in another context, "neglect of the magical prescriptions automatically meant failure; observance did not eliminate all risks..., it only reduced it" (p. 320). People in Ukraine are so psychologically tuned to possible misfortunes, evil eyes, magical spells etc. that they prefer to observe all known prescriptions to reduce risks to a minimum and maximize positive outcomes. For this reason, relatives of a newborn baby are pleased to not hear compliments; all passengers wait patiently for the first male to enter the carriage; a person refusing to lend a thing after the sunset is perceived as a wise housekeeper; and a male invited in the early morning of January 14 to someone else's house is aware of his symbolical function of bringer of a good luck. Even though none calls such prescriptions or taboos magic, people are aware of them, believe in them, and practice them. Magical thinking in Ukraine is widespread and shared. Similar to other traditional thought-systems, the Ukrainian one is an "explanatory and predictive closed system" so that "the believer cannot get outside the web of his thought, he cannot be agnostic, there is no vision of alternatives" (Tambiah, 1971, p. 361). People do not disbelieve in magic as such (i.e., as a system of beliefs) even if magical actions fail to

produce expected magical effects. On the contrary, absence of desirable effects can be then attributed to improper performance of an action or lack of sincere belief in the effects. In that way, "...beliefs are utilized in such a way as to 'excuse' each failure as it occurs and thus the major theoretical assumptions <of traditional thought> are protected even in the face of negative evidence" (Tambiah, p. 361). A strong tradition of folk beliefs amongst Ukrainians permits using a definition of a "magical worldview." Such a worldview is characterized by "ordered relations and interactions between man and the beings of nature" (Wax et al., 1962, p. 181). For people who see the world magically there exist no accidental events, but "each has its chain of causation in which Power, or its lack, was the decisive agency" (Wax et al., p. 183). This worldview has its own strict logic or system of explanation of successes and failures: people who are successful possess Power while the failures lack it. Power can be either benevolent or malevolent, and can vary so that "the possession of one variety of Power does not imply the possession of another" (Wax et al., p. 183). Within the magical worldview, power is perceived as something physical like a "thing freely given, sold, extorted, stolen, or exchanged" (Wax et al., p. 185). Gaining Power then to protect oneself from hostile superior Powers becomes a vital need which is necessary for survival. My numerous interviews and conversations (both purposeful and casual) in Ukraine during the summer 2005 (regarding animal magic, wedding magic as well as beliefs of various kinds) reaffirmed my assumptions that beliefs in supernatural phenomena and magical practices in general are integrated into people's everyday lives and are essential to them, and the general population accepts (and approves of) this magic tradition.

1.2 Religion and traditional folk belief system

The relation between folk beliefs and religious faiths is highly complex. Both Vyse's (1997) quotes are true for the Ukrainian context: "of the individual-centered superstitions or magical acts aimed at bringing good luck, the overwhelming favorite was prayer" (p. 31) and "...popular culture provides more-than-adequate exposure to superstitious and paranormal theories and less-than-adequate exposure to science and mathematics" (p. 124). Generally, commingling of the magical and the spiritual has made it very difficult for scholars to distinguish between the two (Titiev, 1979; Vyse, 1997). Malinowsky (1954) presents a psychological analysis of magic stating that magical beliefs and rituals are combined with the scientific knowledge of believers. Frazer (1963) distinguished between religion, magic, and science. Contemporary anthropological literature, however, fuses magic and religion into one magico-religious system. Despite all possible differences, as Versnel (1991) states, "magic and religion have in common that they refer to supernatural forces and powers, a reality different from normal reality" (p. 178).

In Ukraine, as in many other places, magic and religion are not two mutually exclusive belief systems. On the contrary, there are magical elements in religion, and there are religious aspects in magic practices. Historically, Ukraine represents what Ilarion (1965) called *dvoievir'ia* or syncretism. People hold both Christian and pre-Christian (pagan) beliefs as well as non-Christian more contemporary belief elements without looking at them as contradicting each other. Ilarion hypothesized that the forceful introduction of Christianity into Kyivan Rus' (a proto-state of contemporary Ukraine) in

988 AD by Kyivan Prince Volodymyr the Great led at first to resistance and only superficial formal acceptance, while folk beliefs based on an established philosophy of nature continued to be practiced (p. 313). The Orthodox Church had been fighting remnants of multitheism in proto-Ukrainians for centuries but in vain. Unable to eradicate pagan traditions Christianity "has tightly united with them by assigning new meanings to the old rituals and connecting Old celebrations to the well defined dates of the Christian ones" (Ilarion, p. 306). Inevitably, worshiping of countless gods and goddesses has not disappeared but "qualities of the old gods had been slowly transferred to the Christian saints" (Ilarion, p. 326). Thus, Perun was transformed into two saints: Havryïl (St. Gabriel, April 8/March 26) who is considered the lord of lightning, and Illia (Prophet Elias, August 2/July 20), the lord of thunder (Voropai, 1958, V. 1, p. 285; V.2, p.233). The only goddess in the Kyivan pantheon, Mokosha, became identified with the Christian saint Paraskeva, the goddess of fertility, female handicrafts, and mercy in Ukrainian mythology (Ilarion, p. 110). Ukrainian women put icons of St. Paraskeva near wells. They adhere strictly to the prohibition against spinning thread on Fridays, the day of the week dedicated, first to Mokosha, and then to St. Paraskeva. St. Vlasii, a Christian saint, shares many traits with the pagan god Veles, a protector of the beasts (Ilarion, p. 107; Voropai, V. 1, p.209). On St. Vlasii Day (February 24/11) Ukrainians blessed cattle with holy water, and married women toast their cows in the *korchma*, a village bar. This tradition is still practiced in certain parts of the country. On icons, St. Vlasii is depicted as surrounded by horses, cows, and other domestic animals. People pray to him when their cattle are sick and during epidemics. Generally, Ukrainians worship numerous pagan

spirits and perform certain rituals to either get Power from them or protect themselves from the malevolent Power of those spirits.

Christian symbols and rituals amalgamated with the folk old beliefs. Thus, on Christmas, the master of the house feeds all the cattle with *kutia*, a sacred ritual dish, and invites a spirit of Frost to the dinner first, and afterwards asks the spirit not to come to his fields for the rest of the following year; a candle blessed on Good Thursday is believed to protect from thunder and give bravery to a child; table salt blessed on Easter is considered an extremely effective protection against the evil eye, etc (Ilarion, 1965; Voropai, 1958). It does not mean, however, that the church accepts that amalgam as a natural order of things.

The church does not deny supernatural phenomena, but as Thomas (1971) stresses, it views them in a binary opposition to those produced by either God or the devil (p. 255). Thus there can be miracles, magical actions, healing power of saints and relics, or supernatural human power of holy words and objects only if it is legitimized by the church and recognized as guided by God. Not the laity, but specially trained clergy and monks can reach God through prayers, fasting, and spiritual commitment. Only they can manage spiritual magic called theurgy; and, as Thomas points out, purity, along with divine revelations, are at the core so that "religious perfection would bring magical power" (p. 269). And it is true that Ukrainians perceive a priest as a magical figure able to manipulate the supernatural. For example, water blessed by the priests on Theophany is unanimously recognized as holy water and widely used for healing and warding off the evil eye. Any magic practices which the church does not sanction, however, are frowned upon as devilish. Folk magicians or any people who "sought to use objects for purposes

which nature could not justify were guilty of idolatry, superstition, and at least implicitly of soliciting the aid of the Devil" (Thomas, p. 256). It is, however, worth mentioning that folk magicians and witches in Ukraine never knew church Inquisition prosecutions like in medieval Europe; and witch-trials and public burning of them alive were exceptional (cf Franko, 1991 [1890]).

On the popular level, however, the church's concept of magic as a sin does not seem to be appreciated and never lessened the appeal of magic. Evidently, the roles of priests as magicians and healers never were clearly delimited by the folk. Virtually every village still has its own wise persons (mostly older females) who serve as healers, practitioners in divinations, counselors or simply "people who know." There is a distinction between those who heal with the help of prayers from the church prayer book and those who use incantations for the same purpose and often with the same degree of success. The most religious among my informants from Eastern Ukraine, Vira B-o, 82 years old, who was almost a fanatic Orthodox believer, was a healer. She started her career in her early fifties by reading incantations over a cow whose milk was taken away by a witch. "And it really helped," exclaimed she, "but the priest said I should not do it under any circumstances."[4] Now she uses only prayers from the church prayer book. Even she seems to mix up Christian symbols with pre-Christian ones: she stated that a piece of church incense hung on a cow's horn would protect her from the evil eye. Another informant from the central part of Ukraine, Sofiia, a 78 year old villager, also a regular churchgoer, when explaining why it is prohibited to lend anything from a household the day when any animal gives birth, answered simply: "Why? According to God's directive, this is not supposed to be." She taught me that it was important to say

[4] Personal interview, July 28, 2005

the Lord's Prayer before going to bed and at the same time addressed the *domovyk*, a pagan house spirit, and said how important it was to be nice to him since "He is the guardian!"[5] As a bearer of secret knowledge obtained from her grandfather, Goi, Orysia K-n, a 45 year old lady from Western Ukraine, is highly respected in the village and people ask her to help all the time. When I asked what the words used in her magic formula were and if they started with "In the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit" she said: "No, but they <the words> all are to God."[6]

People tend to believe that those folk healers are taught by God or the angels; therefore, they have achieved the status of Godly people and celebrities both within and outside their local communities. Legends about their power quickly spread far so that suffering people make pilgrimages to their places with hope for a cure just as they would go to the sacred places to touch a miraculous icon or a saint's relics. For example, above mentioned Goi, a very powerful local healer, was said to instantly cure diseases that official medicine could not deal with (e.g., epilepsy). He was able to "read on water," used secret incantations to cure sick animals and overturn other sorcerers' spells. People from all over the former Soviet Union came to him asking for help. Goi was deeply respected by the local priest. And Goi himself was a very religious man who had many Christian icons in his house and attended church regularly. His family stated that Goi received his power as a gift from above when, as a teenager, he had a vision of Mother of God in the sky.

There is a belief that every healer or sorcerer possesses a different degree of power, but they often can be more effective and powerful than the clergy. As Petro V-k,

[5] Personal interview, July 20, 2005
[6] Personal interview, July 13, 2005

an 82 year old man from Western Ukraine confessed, "A wizard is more powerful than a priest is. That <priest> will read a prayer but it does not help with anything." [7]

The order of appeal, i.e., whether people go to church first and then to healers or vice versa, or whether they go in both directions simultaneously to ensure quick and positive outcomes, is difficult to determine. In the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Mother of Pyrohoshcha, in the middle of Kyiv, a list of saints is posted to whom people can pray in case they have a particular problem. Among others, like praying for career advancement or a successful thesis defense, there are prayers "Against sorcery" to St. Tryphon, St. Cyprian, and St. Justina; "From evil spirits and mean people, against witchcraft and the healing from it" to St. Cyprian, St. Justina, St. Niphont of Cyprus, St. Maruthas, and St. Nicetas the Stylite. There are many known miraculous icons, places, and monks on the territory of Ukraine and people go to them if they can afford to. If they cannot, local wise persons are considered. When such people (usually called *babky*) are not easily accessible the seekers sometimes dare to substitute their own actions. For example, Valentyna Z-y, a 53 year old woman from Eastern Ukraine suspected that her cow was evileyed, but could not find a *babka*. In order to help, Valentyna herself composed a list of the suspected persons. Then she prayed "Our Father" walking three circles clockwise around her sick cow. Then she burned the list and fed the ashes to the cow to help it recover. In this ritual, she combined Christian with obviously non-Christian symbols, and she believed in the efficacy of the procedure. Interestingly, the prayers specific for curing the evil eye can be, according to her, found in special literature, and there is indeed an abundance of literature of that kind for purchase

[7] Personal interview, July 12, 2005

everywhere in cities[8]. Oleksandra K-o, a 63 year old lady from Eastern Ukraine has been using a special ritual for decades to cure family members affected by the evil eye: she made signs of a cross with a kitchen knife over a person and whispers a special incantation three times. If she yawned forcefully during the procedure, she said, that meant the person was indeed affected by someone's evil eye and thus was relieved through her ritual.

The above mentioned Orysia K-n knows various magic formulas for animals. She said she was able to help any animal except for pigs and horses, so that they should be treated only by doctors. When explaining why those are the exceptions she referred to the Biblical legends that when Jesus was born and was in a barn the horse started eating straw on which he laid, and the pig was digging a hole under him. Therefore, they were the cursed animals.

During the Soviet era, both religion and magical practices were prosecuted. They both, however, continued to exist and survived seventy four years of Soviet ideology. They both were needed because they helped people cope with their personal everyday problems in the face of social uncertainty and the cataclysms of the twentieth century. They both served the therapeutic function of lessening anxiety, and helped one come through crises (Lindquist, 2006; Malinowsky, 1954). It seems, however, that the time span 'covered' by religion and magic differs somewhat: while religion gives strength to become reconciled with the past and live in the present, magical acts are always directed towards the future. Therefore, popular demand for magic is unlikely to disappear in Ukraine in the near future.

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[8] For example, a very popular book by Aleksandr Aksenov (1995). *Ia nie koldun, ia – znakhar'* (I am not a wizard, I am a healer). Donetsk: Donechchyna.

It is no wonder then that magic accompanies Ukrainians at weddings. As Ilarion (1965) underlined, contemporary wedding rituals developed long before the adoption of Christianity (p. 212). Pagan traditions and what Paxson (2005) called the "agricultural religion" (p. 163) of the East Slavs are older than Orthodoxy. As Wax et al. (1962) notice, "Judaeo-Christianity, as a congery of religious world views, is truly consonant to urban and commercial societies, being antipathetic to the mythos of nature accompanying such ways of life as … peasant agricultural" (p. 187). Therefore, the wedding as the most prominent rite of passage is but an example of how religious elements peacefully coexist with magic.

1.3 Magical acts and objects used at weddings

Marriage in Ukraine is a highly important and desirable event in the life not only of the young people but also of the whole community. Traditionally the couple after the wedding starts living with the parents of the groom; however, the tendency towards the nuclear family is becoming more and more prevalent in both village and urban settings. Often, a couple has an independent income and can arrange the wedding (and future family life) according to its own preferences. However, even if the ceremony of the wedding in Ukraine is "modernized," the elements of a traditional wedding still take place. More and more couples who are not churchgoers in their regular lives want their marriage to be blessed in church, to step on a *rushnyk*, to get some protection from God and ensure a strong happy family for the future.

Weddings in Ukraine cause a great shift in social and individual statuses of those who wed. Using Turner's terminology, the wedding is a rite of status elevation. The Ukrainian village community (*hromada*) is very concerned if young people are unmarried when they reach a certain age. The villagers therefore do everything possible to prevent anybody remaining single. Such a person would be an outsider with a low status, a permanent liminar not fully incorporated into village social life. The wedding ceremony in the Ukrainian village, with its shifts back and forth between the houses of the bride and groom, is a perfect example of antagonism between two families of the couple. Two young "strangers," each of whom is a representative of her or his larger family and community, join to create a new family and produce children. This union is nevertheless desirable, and is supposed to be successful and to last to the end of the couple's life. As an important, valuable, and desirable major event, the wedding is an example of invested hopes of both "camps" of relatives. However, the possibility of misfortune is very high. Since nobody is able to control fortune in such a matter, much effort is done to make a wedding "right" and not let anybody or anything "spoil" or ruin the future marriage. According to van Gennep (1960), wedding is a rite of transition between two worlds, two states. It is a transition between being separate plain individuals and being in a sacred union with God, recognized by society; between being children of parents and parents themselves, able to produce expected and legitimate progeny. It is believed that the union is sacred and mystical, given by God. Due to this, the couple is especially vulnerable to the influence of all kinds of hostile forces, which, as Ukrainians believe, will try to prevent them from making this successful transition, and from being happy. To

counterbalance this evil force, to protect from it becomes an important task of positive and negative (taboo) magic used extensively during Ukrainian weddings.

Documented ethnographic literature on traditional Ukrainian weddings from the end of the XIX – beginning of the XX centuries show that magic beliefs and practices associated with this ceremony are numerous: there are magical acts for giving one spouse superiority over the other; enhancing the fertility of the couple and ensuring the preferred sex of future children; facilitating marriage of the yet unmarried; enhancing love and attachment of the couple towards each other; ensuring the couple's well-being and prosperity; protecting the couple from evil forces or misfortune, etc. Some magical acts and objects from the traditional wedding ceremony are gone, but many – especially in villages - survived the Soviet era and their overt expression is now common in Ukraine.

Bogatyrev (1998 [1929]) wrote on magical elements used at traditional weddings in Ukraine at the beginning of the XX century and provided their classification according to the two main laws of magic: contagious and sympathetic. This classification is based on Frazer's (1963 [1890]) distinction of two main laws of magic – law of contact and law of similarity (p. 11). According to the law of contact, the object transfers its power or magic quality to the person who directly contacts this object. According to the law of similarity, the desirable effect can be achieved through some action with an object if the action will be later repeated with the same or similar object. Thus, contagious magic is based on the law of contact and *sympathetic* magic - on the law of similarity. Often, however, as Bogatyrev stated, "both kinds of magic… can be found in the same magical action" (p. 19). Frazer also divided magic into positive (or sorcery) and negative (or taboo). Positive magic is present in actions aimed at achieving some desirable effect,

while negative magic consists in non-performing, avoiding actions, which would otherwise cause some undesirable or detrimental effect.

Additionally, Bogatyrev distinguished motivated and unmotivated magical actions: if the person performing the action can explain the reasons why the action produces a desirable result, then this is motivated magical action. If the person does not know the reason why the action causes a desired effect, but still believes in the result, then this is an example of unmotivated magical action. Not only magical acts but also omens bear the magical function of foretelling. However, unlike magical actions, omens are not performed: they appear spontaneously as messengers, and their meanings are usually explained within a binary opposition of "good – bad." Although, usually the guests and relatives are the persons who notice and interpret omens, the couple themselves may be aware of them and of their negative or positive meaning in regard to their marriage.

Using this classification of magical actions, we can briefly discuss some magical actions performed at a traditional Ukrainian wedding. It should be noted that every locale in Ukraine has its specific wedding traditions. Whatever is common in one place may be unknown in another, and any generalization is quite problematic in this sense. There are, however, some objects and acts that tend to be present at weddings all over the territory of Ukraine.

The cult of bread in Ukraine is very strong and it is often used in various rituals. The attitude toward bread is seen in the expression "holy bread." Bread is a basis of life, it is a "symbol of fertility, therefore it plays an important role at a wedding. It is generally a symbol of happiness" (Ilarion, 1965, p. 63). Thus, special ritual bread, *korovai*, is used

at weddings where it represents a "magical circle," fullness of life, and marriage. Decorative doves at the top of a *korovai* symbolize "true and tender eternal love" (Ilarion, p. 73). Making a *korovai* is one of the magical acts of the wedding. The *korovai* is "...efficacious independently of magical actions...It possesses magical power in itself" (Bogatyrev, pp. 34-35). It means that regardless of being touched or not, the *korovai* bears magical symbolism by mere presence. However, we can see that actions done to and with it combine both sympathetic and contagious magic. The *korovai* baking is in fact an act of divination or "the art or practice of foreseeing future events or discovering hidden knowledge through supernatural means" (Ilarion, p. 332). Therefore, if the *korovai* does not turn out, cracks, or has other unwanted defects, the same will happen to the marriage of the couple, according to the law of similarity. At the same time, kissing the *korovai*, cutting and eating, sharing it with relatives, according to the law of contact, should pass magical quality of this ritual bread to people. Baking a *korovai* is a special ceremony where the slightest details count. Only happily married women can bake a *korovai*. Divorced or widowed women should not touch the dough because it is believed they can transfer their unhappy fate to the new couple. The process of baking is ritually structured: it is accompanied with ritual songs and sayings, special actions, it must happen on a certain day (usually the Friday before the wedding) and at a certain time (usually in the afternoon). Women who are going to bake a *korovai* come to the house of the young couple (each of them separately) with something in their hands (usually a loaf of bread, sugar, or eggs); they prepare an oven in a certain way, and they are cheerful and happy for the young couple. Any problems with the *korovai* would seriously upset the families of the couple.

The traditional Ukrainian wedding had a special procedure for distributing the parts of a *korovai*: the central part of it usually was given to the parents and the couple, the base to the musicians, and the rest should have been sliced so that everybody present at the wedding could have a piece of it thus getting a magic slice of happiness. A *korovai* must be shared and eaten. As informants from *Selychivka* village in Central Ukraine stated, it should be eaten otherwise the bride will get old very quickly[9].

There are magical actions performed with the *rushnyk*. A *rushnyk* is a ritual embroidered cloth. It also has a magical power in itself. It probably symbolizes a road into future family life. So that when a *rushnyk* is spread before the couple, some coins are thrown on it, as Chubyns'kyi (1995 [1872]) stated. According to the law of contact, it will help the couple be wealthy. Stepping on a *rushnyk* in church is believed not only to make the first step on that road but also to give one spouse superiority over the other: according to the law of similarity, whoever steps first will become the head of the family. Usually the guests watch this moment carefully. Bogatyrev (1998 [1929]) also stated that "when the couple leaves the bride tries to step on the husband's foot in order to rule the household" (p. 106). Chubyns'kyi (1995 [1872]) provided other examples such as when the bride stepped on her groom's *zhupan* during confession in church, and when she tried to put her hand atop the groom's hand while the priest was binding their hands together with a *rushnyk* (pp. 140-141). In all those examples the law of similarity is utilized: "stepping" and "pressing" on the groom will help the bride to keep him "under her foot," to be superior.

[9] Audio file Selychivka981. Interviews collected by Professor Natalie Kononenko in Ukraine, 1998. Web-resource: http://projects.tapor.ualberta.ca/UkraineAudio/

There is a belief that the couple possesses a magical power that can facilitate the marriage of unmarried people. Here the law of contact works. Chubyns'kyi (1995 [1872]) provides examples when the bride - while standing on a *rushnyk* - can step aside a little bit so that her *druzhka* (bridesmaid) could put her toes on it too and marry the same year (p. 141). In addition, the bride can throw greenery to the girls or just give them a look. All this will facilitate their marriages. Describing a variant of this ritual, when the bride takes off the crowns or headdresses from her *druzhky* (and the first girl whose crown is removed will marry first), Bogatyrev (1998 [1929]), however, stated that the groom and the best man possessed the same magical power: "When the groom brings the bride to his house, they both leap over the threshold; then the first bridesmaid to touch the groom or the best man will marry before the others" (p. 106).

Several magical actions are performed to ensure the couple to love each other more. The bride and the groom can be treated with honey accompanied with the verbal formula "May your love be as sweet as honey" (Bogatyrev, p. 106). Here the law of contact and the law of similarity coincide. Probably when the guests at a contemporary Ukrainian wedding make the couple kiss by screaming repeatedly "*Hirko!*" ("Bitter!") the law of similarity is utilized for the same purpose: the couple kisses, and this display of their love turns something bitter into sweet. Probably, it is presumed that the couple "kisses out" all bitterness from their future life, or perhaps later on they will easily "cure" the problems of their marital life with that "sweet remedy."

Showering the couple with wheat, rye, oats, or hops is yet another magical act for ensuring the couple's well-being and prosperity so that they always will have enough grain in their granary. Grains always symbolize wealth, and this ritual originates from

Ukrainian rural agrarian tradition. Besides, the Ukrainian word for rye, *zhyto*, has the same etymological root as the word for life, *zhyttia*. In this magical action of showering, the law of contact as well as the law of similarity works. At contemporary Ukrainian weddings, candies might be used along with coins for showering. The more expensive the candies are (chocolate candies are valued most), the better the future prosperity of the couple and their future peaceful marriage will be.

Children are very important to Ukrainians, and the guests repeatedly wish the couple to have children. A married couple living without them for more than one year without any reasonable excuses (e.g., the wife is a student and wants to get her degree first) would be a center of public concern and gossip. A childless couple possesses lower social status than one with children. Absence of children is considered a bad sign, and means that the marriage "is not blessed." There are Ukrainian folktales about old childless couples that are very obsessed about not having children, and eventually get a magical child. Although children of both sexes are welcomed, boys are valued more. In the past, magical actions were performed to cause male babies to be born. Bogatyrev (1998 [1929], p. 104), and Vovk (1995 [1928], p. 206) described examples of when the bride took a little boy in her lap in the groom's house. According to both laws of magic, she acquired the ability to have boys. Bogatyrev was more specific about the real purpose of the ritual since in his variant of the ritual description a bride not only holds the boy but also "fondles his testicles" (p. 104).

Finally, much effort is done to protect the couple from the evil eye. When a wedding train moves to the groom's house, holy icons are carried in front of it and there must be the crossed pins in the clothes over the hearts of the couple. The relatives usually

are alert for any suspicious objects under the table, especially where the couple sits (crossed knives, forks, soil and the like). Number thirteen is considered an evil number (cf Ryan, 1999, p. 314) and people usually avoid arranging weddings on the 13th day of the month.

There are many omens that are believed to have special meaning (usually negative): rain during the wedding, dropping the wedding ring in the church, spotting the dress with a drop of wax, fainting during the ceremony, forgetting things in the house while heading to the church, and others. There are also numerous taboos like crossing in front of a wedding train or passing between the couple. Even if a couple does not notice some of those omens and things go wrong, people will recapitulate the wedding day analyzing what was done wrong.

Since "within the magical world, ritual is a focal point of existence" (Wax et al., 1962, p. 184) Ukrainians devote much effort to performing the wedding ritual properly. Proper performance of it turns the benevolent Power in the required direction, protects from malevolent Power, and ensure a good future for the couple.

Chapter 2: Elements of Magic at Contemporary Ukrainian Weddings

2.1 Methodology

The methodology for investigating the beliefs complex is far from perfect. Beliefs cannot be described by objective methods, because beliefs have subjective meanings for every believer. It is hard to communicate with the informants about beliefs and superstitions if the interviewees do not share the same view on them as the interviewer. Interviewees will often not openly admit to holding some superstitions to a stranger. As a folklorist I cannot collect the beliefs themselves. Following Pimple (1990), I can collect only the expressions of them (p. 51). This means I have to look at contextual data to be able to discuss beliefs with the informants. Instead of compiling a long list of the *generally held* beliefs, studying the beliefs in a social context of some particular rite would give me an opportunity to describe them through the interviewees' behaviors. Behavior then would become an indicator of whether people believe in and practice magical acts. My task was not only to collect my informants' expressions of superstitions in regards to the wedding ritual but to find out their attitude towards traditional beliefs as well (i.e., if they approve of the tradition now; if they like it or not) and thus to interpret their meanings; to conclude if those beliefs are alive (i.e., they exist in the form of cultural memory and practices); to analyze how well-defined and homogeneous the beliefs system is. If they do believe and practice them it would allow me to discuss the function of superstitions in a given community. In this respect the context of a wedding ritual serves the purpose of my research best.

The wedding is one of the central events in a human life-cycle. Talking about the wedding day usually transfers the informants back several years or decades. It invokes pleasant memories, not only about the day itself, but about the courtship period and making a decision to marry. Wedding is a "safe" topic even for those informants who later on separated or divorced. In such a case, conversations about the wedding days would give my informants a nice opportunity to recall the time when everything was different and better for them, to restore their memories of the so called "radiant past."

My main research methods involved studying the literature on traditional Ukrainian weddings, and performing retrospective interviews about the informants' weddings. Although wedding is a group event, I talked to my informants individually, even if I took the interview from a married couple. The reason was that a wife and a husband may have different notions about superstitions, may believe differently, and might not necessarily be the initiators of any magical actions during their own wedding. Memory bias was not the primary concern of my research because I was not collecting oral history about a particular time span. The precise details of the weddings (such as the number of the guests, the cost of the attire, etc.) were less important for me because I was first of all interested in beliefs accompanying certain actions. To give cues to my informants, to help them to "restore" the picture of their wedding day, I used a questionnaire where I first asked about an object or action and then about beliefs associated with that. The questions were asked in such a way that the informants would not guess beforehand they were about their beliefs and superstitions rather than about the wedding day itself.

The questionnaire was compiled according to the description of the magic rituals at a wedding provided by Bogatyrev (1998 [1929]). It included fourteen basic clusters of questions and focused on the most distinctive magical elements and rituals of a Ukrainian wedding such as the *korovai*, the *rushnyk*, the showering of the couple, wedding day omens, "bad luck" versus "good luck" beliefs, and so on (see Appendix A). While asking questions I purposefully avoided using the words "magic" or "superstition" unless the informants themselves started using them. Instead, I verified their opinions on how good or bad some object or action at a wedding was considered to be. The structure of the question cluster was built in such a way that I first asked if an object was present or an action was performed at an interviewee's wedding; then I moved on to asking the reasons for having or not having and performing or not performing the item. After that I proceeded to what exactly an informant knew about the object or action, which beliefs are associated with it and if she or he believed in them. My assumption was that "magic was present" if the interviewees did perform magical actions (regardless of whether they could or could not explain their meanings) during the weddings and believed in them.

My research sample consisted of two groups according to the country of origin, Ukrainian and Canadian-Ukrainian. It was further subdivided into four subgroups according to social and marital status: villagers, urban dwellers, clergy, and divorced people. The Ukrainian group included twenty informants in total. All interviews in Ukraine were collected during the summer of 2005. The quotations provided in the text are careful translations of what the interviewees said. My Ukrainian informants consisted of people living in different regions of the country where there generally are noticeable variations in terms of the wedding traditions (definitions, songs, the order of events, etc).

My Canadian informants did not constitute a unified community either. All of them had a sense of Ukrainian identity, but ethnic identity may be expressed differently by every member of the community. If the interviewees spoke English their words are quoted in the text without any stylistic or grammatical changes. Objective difficulties in searching for Canadian-Ukrainian informants allowed only a smaller group – fifteen informants of different ages and generations of Ukrainian immigration. Therefore, the study cannot be regarded as representative. A representative study would require hundreds of informants which is impossible from the time-frame and financial considerations.

Such a sample does not permit me to make any generalizations or concrete conclusions about all Canadian Ukrainians. Several informants had attended classes on Ukrainian Folklore and were more knowledgeable about Ukrainian traditions and symbolism than those who did not take such classes. The sample was formed mostly through the personal contacts of the interviewees, and included people who preliminary agreed to provide information about their weddings. I explained that I was looking for Ukrainian elements at Canadian-Ukrainian weddings. Interview sessions were on average about thirty minutes long. During the interviews, however, many informants realized that the real purpose of the interview was different. Professional ethics required disclosure; therefore, there was a debriefing session after each interview when I explained to my informants that I was in fact looking for traditional beliefs and superstitions.

All the interviews were recorded with the permission of the informants after signing the consent forms. Two informants did not give their consent for use of their names in a published variant of the interview. In order to protect identities of these and all my interviewees, I have assigned each one of them a number, which reflects nothing else

but the chronological order of interviewing within each particular group. This means of protection from undesirable yet possible embarrassment seemed to be especially needed in Canada since my field work was mostly done in Edmonton and many of the informants were well-known inside the Ukrainian social community. All personal information about the research participants is secured in my private notebook.

Qualitative analysis of interviews of the Ukrainians in Ukraine and Canada was supposed to illustrate the similarity and differences between the belief traditions in the two countries. This cross-cultural analysis of the wedding ritual and the belief complex surrounding it was to help to answer the questions: What is the attitude towards and function of the traditional folk beliefs in Canada? What are the customs that traditionally accompany such an important celebration as a wedding? Do Canadian Ukrainians of different generations approve of this tradition? To what degree are magical beliefs the part of Ukrainians' ethnic identity in a multiethnic Canadian context?

The main focus of my study then is beliefs and superstitions within the wider field of acculturation. In fact, the research is a study of culture through the lens of folklore, an "applied folklore" study which uses a cross-cultural perspective and folklore as a means of describing and explaining similarities and differences between two cultural groups and roles of the beliefs in them. Following Georges' et al. (1995) view of beliefs, I am going to write about the beliefs from four perspectives, i.e. beliefs as artifacts; as cultural tradition expressed through a groups' identity; as behaviors of individuals in those groups; and as entities transmissible temporally and spatially. The study is not descriptively detailed but is aimed at identifying the overall patterns of believing within two different

milieus – Ukrainian and Canadian. It is a selective rather than inclusive study providing limited data and outlining tendencies.

Generally, testing non-material phenomena – especially magical beliefs and superstitions – is a difficult and highly subjective project. This became one of the difficulties I encountered while doing my field work in Canada. Having being raised in Ukraine, I hold traditional beliefs and share that magical worldview so characteristic of Ukrainians in Ukraine. At the same time I had to remain objectively distant from my subject matter, non-judgmental, and display no surprise or disappointment with the statements that would indicate significant distancing of Ukrainian Canadians from the folk traditions prevailing in their historical motherland.

2.2 Description of the Ukrainian Subgroups

Interviewing Ukrainians in Ukraine about magic was easy: talking about supernatural phenomena for them was as natural as talking about their childhood memories or their youth during the Soviet times or about contemporary hardships. Asking questions about beliefs of different kinds, displaying a sincere interest in them was perceived by these Ukrainians as crediting them with special wisdom. They were willing to provide any information they knew, and there was no need to push my interviewees toward "magic" conversation. Magic is an integral part of every day life, and all my interviewees had enough vocabulary to communicate it, to express their opinions and concerns. As a result, I got voluminous additional information that was not included in my interview questions and which was not listed in the published sources used for composing the questionnaire. This kind of topic is widely articulated among Ukrainians. Even if magic is not discussed, it is still performed and kept in mind.

Most of my interviewees were women. The reason for having mostly female interviewees (only Group 4, clergymen, consisted totally of males) was due to gendered narratives and parallel interviews I recorded regarding other subject matters. Men were more willing to talk about domestic animals or households than about their weddings. Besides, my sources sincerely believed that women could narrate better than men. In some instances it was indeed the case.

I purposefully tried to select informants from different parts of Ukraine, especially from the eastern and western ones. Those two regions are assumed by many to be fundamentally different in terms of political orientation and adherence to folk traditions, with Western Ukraine being the most "fundamentalist" and patriotic part of population and Eastern Ukraine the least.

2.2.1 Rural group

Below is a chart showing basic sociologic information about informants of the rural group: sex of the informants, regions of the country where they live, their dates of births and marriages.

Table 1. Married Ukrainian Village Informants

	Sex	Region	DOB	DOM
Interviewee #1	F	WU	1943	1965
Interviewee #2	F	WU	1943	1968
Interviewee #3	F	EU	1942	1971
Interviewee #4	F	EU	1939	1960
Interviewee #5	F	EU	1936	1958

Interviewee #6	F	WU	1972	1998

Key: WU – Western Ukraine; EU – Eastern Ukraine; DOB – date of birth; DOM – date of marriage.

A village wedding is a relatively spontaneous event with a total preparation period ranging from a couple of weeks to a couple of months. It often equals the "pondering period" set by the *sil'rada* or city ZAHS[10] for the couple, one month. Ukrainian villagers tend to marry somewhat earlier than urban youth, thus the couples' parents are mainly responsible for the wedding preparations. The main focus of attention of those preparations is the financial aspect: calculations of necessary expenses, delivering of the necessary amount of food and drinks from a city, etc. It is not only a spontaneous but a communal event as well: neighbors help the family to arrange the wedding, borrow furniture and utensils, cook before, and serve during the wedding banquet, which usually happens at home or sometimes in a village banquet hall. The community always knows which elements are supposed to be at the wedding, at what time they appear, and how everything is supposed to proceed.

As Table 1 indicates, the average age of marriage in this group was 24 years. Although many of the informants were at that time financially independent of their parents they, however, could not design their own wedding rituals according to their own choice. It would be true to admit that nobody in a village would dare to significantly deviate from the traditional wedding celebration. Voluntary omission of any wedding elements significant for a particular village would break the system of a wedding structure and upset the villagers. On the other hand, any new elements introduced during

[10] ZAHS stands for Zapys Aktiv Hromadians'koho Stanu, a state institution in any city that officially certifies marriages, births, and deaths of the citizens. Every city has one central ZAHS building and several regional ones. A couple cannot be married in church without the civil marriage certificate issued by the ZAHS. A village couple can be either officially registered in the *sil'rada* or go to the city ZAHS for that.

the wedding and unfamiliar in that locale would be looked upon with suspicion. The village wedding preserved its own traditions in a more rigid manner than the urban wedding. Regardless of whether a poor couple was marrying or a rich one, the stages of the wedding ritual have remained much the same. What changed was a financial ability to impress those present at the wedding with the degree of opulence and money spent for gifts and the meal. As Informant #1 noted, "It was simpler a long time ago because the <wedding> meal was simple. And now people try to cook something <exotic> that is not usually served here."

The traditional wedding lasted several days to the utmost satisfaction of those involved and the rest of the village. According to Bogatyrev (1998 [1929]), Chubyns'kyi (1995 [1872]), and Vovk (1995 [1928]), the traditional Ukrainian wedding was an event for the entire village, and people came to it without an official invitation. Even nowadays, anyone interested can come to the *klub*[11] or *sil'rada*[12] where the wedding ceremony takes place to observe the couple, to congratulate them, or simply to satisfy their curiosity in the bride's beauty and attire. What Paxson (2005) noted for the Russian village context remained true for the Ukrainian one: people in a village constituted a family group whose life goes on before the eyes of everyone else, and whose secrets, concerns, misfortunes, or happiness immediately become common knowledge.

Villagers in Ukraine could be called tradition-keepers. They knew about traditional rituals, symbols, and omens and believed in them. There were some regional differences that influenced the choice of vocabulary and quantity of the wedding elements but there were few if any differences in terms of magic beliefs. The wedding in fact was

[11] A leisure center for the villagers headed by the 'cultural workers' hired by the state.
[12] The main official institution representing the state in rural settings.

surrounded by numerous detailed prescriptions and proscriptions. For example, Interviewee #6 stated that a ribbon should be attached to a bride's wreath by an uneven number of stitches (usually 3 or 5)[13]; a tiny bouquet should be attached to a groom's jacket without cutting the thread or making knots. According to the law of similarity, violation of the taboo on cutting or knotting would result in eventual "cutting" of a marriage or creating hardships, serious problems for the couple. According to her, the first couple to arrive at a wedding should be a happily married one: "<The couple> even asks: 'Please, come early first, before anybody else comes.' Because how something begins is how it will continue." Here, according to both the law of similarity and of contact, a newly wedded couple magically acquires the ability to become happy through those who already embody desired marital happiness. There is a special magic ritual still performed in Ukraine: an orphan goes to a cemetery before the day of her wedding to invite her deceased parents to her wedding (Informants #1 and #2). There were some proscriptions that the informants were unable to explain but were sure must be adhered to: "A bride should end her invitation route in a house with no children…It could influence the wedding," "There is something <meal>…I do not remember what exactly…that the couple should not eat during the wedding or else they will 'eat each other' <in their marital life>" (Informant #1).

All six informants had a *korovai* for their weddings. In western Ukraine, the object with the same function is called a *kalach* or *kolach*. In all six cases that ritual bread was baked by female relatives at home (rather than bought); Informants #2 and #5 stated that their mothers were the primary bakers. There exists a taboo against females whose

[13] Even numbers in Ukrainian folk culture are considered unlucky, bad. An even number of objects is allowed only at funerals or commemoration days (2 flowers put on a grave; 4 candies given to neighbors for the soul of the diseased, etc.)

marital life failed in any way to participate in baking of the *korovai*, i.e. they should not be widowed, divorced, or have marital conflicts: "The *kalach*-maker must not be a widow!" (Interviewee #1)

The *korovai* was usually made the day before the wedding with much caution: "You have to take care around the *kalach* so that it turns out beautiful…so it would be a great one" (Informant #1); "If it does not turn out, rises and then settles, or cracks – the marital life of the couple will be bad" (Informant #5). That is why it was important to eliminate all possible external influences and thus "purify" the ability of the *korovai* to magically predict a good future for the couple: "When it is being baked no door slamming, loud talking, or arguing are allowed. There must be silence and peace" (Interviewee #5).

Explaining the symbolism of the *korovai*, Ukrainian informants referred to financial richness: "It <the *korovai*> is like wealth" (Informant #3); "It means a wealthy life so that there would be bread and something to go with it" (Informant #5). All six informants shared their *korovai* with the guests and ate it all.

Stepping on a *rushnyk* has been described by Chubyns'kyi (1995 [1872], p. 141), and Vovk (1995 [1928], p. 254) as a part of a church ceremony. During the twentieth century when religion was banned this element of the wedding was secularized and taken over by the *sil'rada* and village *klub* where the Soviet culture-workers spread it in front of a couple congratulating them on behalf of the state with the start of a new, family "road" to follow. Even though church weddings were officially persecuted, nobody could forbid the parents from blessing the couple with icons at home (blessing in the *sil'rada* or *klub* involved an official thanking of the parents, but there were no icons, of course).

Also, nobody could prohibit the sprinkling of the couple with blessed water before the wedding. Informants #1, #3, and #6 did not stand on the *rushnyk*. They were not married in church and the *sil'rada* at the time they married did not use the *rushnyk*. Informants explained the *rushnyk* symbolism in words of motion. They compared it to both a road and *dolia*, human fate, meaning that a couple came into a new phase of their lives when their two separate paths mingled into one and from now on they started a new journey together: "It is as if they start a new life together" (Informant #3); "It is usually spread when someone is about to depart for far away" (Informant #4); "A couple stands on it as if on a common road so that they would share both joy and sadness, so that the two would have one common fate like the *rushnyk* <is one for two>" (Informant #5).

There was a widespread support of the belief that the order in which the bride and the groom stepped on the *rushnyk* predicted who would dominate in the marriage and would become a head of the family. Informants #2, #3, and #5 however, did not know about that belief when they were getting married, and Informant #2 articulated that a patriarchal family structure was rather traditional in villages, and noted that the "village condemns it when a wife is a head of the family; a husband should always be the head." Other informants, on the contrary, consciously wanted to get power: "Oh, yes, I knew about it, and stepped on it with the right foot!" (Informant #4); "You know, this belief absolutely justifies itself. I did not know about it but relatives told me later on that I would be the head of the family. And so it was" (Informant #5); "Yes, people try to do it. And they <the couple> are instructed at home to do so because whoever is the first to step on it <*rushnyk*> will become the master of the house" (Informant #6).

Stepping on the *rushnyk* was not the only means of divination about the future marital life. Informant #1 and her groom had to tear apart a grilled chicken and eat it. People said that whoever got a longer bone with a torn piece of meat would presumably live longer than the spouse.

All the informants were showered at their weddings: "<They> showered us with rye, sugar, candies, coins, and blessed water so that our life would be nice and sweet" (Informant #1); "<They> showered us with rye and sugar so that life would be sweet" (Informant #2); "We were showered with hops, coins, candies, and grains. And they wished us health and happiness" (Informant #3); "When we went to the *sil'rada* we were showered all the way there with wheat and rye, money coins, and candies. Grains – for the good crops to follow, coins – for money to be in the house, candies – for the marriage to be sweet. And they used to repeat: "For your health! For your happiness!" (Informant #4); "When I came out from my yard they showered me with wheat, coins, and candies so that there would be a wealthy life, and so that life would not be bitter. They put it all in a sieve and then showered from it saying three times: "May God give you happiness! For all the best!" (Informant #5); "When we left the house and when we returned <from the official registration> we sat at the table, and the relatives walked around the table three times and showered us with wheat and sugar so that our life would be sweet" (Informant #6).

In this ritualistic showering both the law of contact and law of similarity apply. People wish a couple a happy and full life, and they put the couple in contact with metaphorical materializations of their wishes. The informants from the western part of Ukraine provided an additional showering ritual that works in a reverse order. It did not

happen at their weddings but it used to exist before the Soviet period and it takes place now that "it is very rare in a village that someone just registers the marriage officially, without a church ceremony" (Informant #1). The pair was showered by others before going to church but when they came out of church as an already wedded couple they tossed candies, coins, grains, or sugar to the crowd. Evidently, the couple acquired a special sacred power given by the church wedding and thus was able to share it with the rest.

This magical power of a couple is also recognized in a ritual of facilitating the marriage of others. Again, what the informants had at their weddings did not coincide with what they knew and said about how it was generally supposed to be. Tossing a bouquet by a bride to the unmarried girls was considered a borrowed, American practice that has appeared relatively recently. Informant #4 stated that at the time of her wedding there was no custom of having flowers at a village wedding at all. And yet Informant #5 did toss a bouquet. Considering that at that time the USSR was a closed system and she was a villager, it might have been an ethnic custom since her mother was Polish. For tossing, she used not regular flowers but very special kinds of dried greenery: mint, sweet basil, and lovage (Levisticum officinale, Lat). She then added: "Well, I do not know if it is truth or not, but the girl who caught my bouquet got married in half a year." This somewhat uncertain statement signified her believing in omens because later on she narrated a story about a house-spirit predicting her own marriage. Informants from Western Ukraine (#1, #2, and #6) provided a local variant of this ritual called "*rozhuliuvaty velion*." It consisted in the bride dancing with every unmarried girl consecutively while putting her veil on the girl's head. Except for Informant #4 who was

unable to provide any information about the means of marriage facilitation, all believed in the validity of the ritual. Informant #1 reflected that attitude of believing best: "There is something truthful about it." The ritual itself was obviously gender biased with a bride helping her female friends to marry as soon as possible with the help of contagious and homeopathic magic. Informant #6, however, stated that a groom possessed equal power: "Nowadays he <the groom> has a tiny bouquet on his chest. He puts it against other guy's chests and they dance together. In olden days, he would put his own hat with a wreath on their heads."

The traditional village wedding had many other examples of gender biases. One of them was the preference of a firstborn male child over a female one. At a wedding, the guests usually "present money for a boy, for a girl, and for twins" (Informant #6). And yet for a village man a son was a matter of special pride, an inheritor of his property, land, and name. Therefore, "a woman wants a girl to be firstborn because she would be her helper, and a man wants a boy" (Informant #2); "Somehow all want a baby boy. Often <the husband> blames his wife if she gives birth to a girl instead of a boy" (Informant #5). Lack of knowledge of the villagers in the realm of genetics is responsible for their use of magic and existing gender bias. Informant #1 stated that "when a couple exits the yard two little boys cross their path, and they get *kalach* for doing so. And girls are prohibited from crossing the path of the couple!" This custom, again, shows that male gender is associated with good luck and female with bad luck. None of the informants, however, could identify a traditional ritual for ensuring the sex of future children as described in Ukrainian ethnographic literature (Bogatyrev [1929], p. 104; Vovk [1928], p. 206).

Although children are desirable they are surrounded in villages by numerous taboos. It is strictly prohibited to present clothes for future children as a gift. Furthermore, it is absolutely unheard of to arrange a "baby shower" before the baby is actually born. My informants unanimously stated that it would be equivalent to summoning bad luck upon a couple or the baby itself: "You should not present baby clothes before its birth" (Informant #2); "You must not celebrate a baby before it is born! It can get ill" (Informant #4); "There is a belief that a baby should first be born and only after that you can buy things for it. You should not prepare beforehand" (Informant #5); "Until the baby is born nobody must buy any clothes because they are afraid. They say the baby can die otherwise. You must not do it beforehand! Even if the guests present some toys at a wedding, they say it is for the couple, not for their future children" (Informant #6).

Since in Ukrainian villages the wedding registry is an unknown phenomenon, the possibility of getting unexpected gifts is very high. The informants stated there existed certain things that should not be presented at weddings. If they were nevertheless presented (purposefully or unintentionally) they became signs of bad luck, the harbingers of upcoming misfortune. Among those things were knives and forks (Informant #1, #2, #4, #5). According to the law of similarity, sharp metal objects would "cut off" the marriage of the couple or the couple would live "on knives," the Ukrainian idiom for constant quarrels and animosity. The informants also mentioned mirrors, wrist watches, and black fabric as prohibited gifts: broken mirrors bring bad luck; wrist watches count down either the couple's time together or their life-time; and anything black is strongly

associated with funerals: "<They> can't make a bride's wreath if dressed in black. Everyone who makes the wreath must wear either red or white kerchiefs" (Informant #6).

Not only objects but certain types of behavior at a wedding were feared as omens foretelling bad luck. For example, it was a bad luck for a couple if someone came at a wedding in black attire, or if a couple forgot something in the house while heading to church or *sil'rada*. A couple must not go back under any circumstances; it is a taboo. In such a case some guest, not a close relative, has to counteract negative consequences and go back into the house instead of the couple. It was also considered bad luck if a groom saw his bride's wedding dress before the wedding day: "If he sees her dress before that day they will not live together" (Informant #4). It was considered a bad omen if someone crossed the path of a couple, especially with something empty: "Mean people can harm them, can cross their way with empty buckets" (Informant #3); "A female neighbor of my niece passed in front of their car. And she <the bride> got divorced in a year" (Informant #5). In contrast to little boys crossing the couple's way according to the law of similarity, that neighbor "cut" their marital road, interfered with it, became an obstacle on the way that was supposed to be clear. The same Informant #5, who has been treating her husband for alcoholism for many years, added that a theft at a wedding was a bad omen; in her case it foretold her marital problems: "Someone stole the kerchief which I tied across his <the groom's> shoulders. Well, if I only could turn everything back I would not marry him in the first place." It is also a sign of bad luck if a wedding train meets a funeral procession in the street: "Funerals should not take place that day" (Informant #1); "It is bad if they meet a funeral. They will not live together. Mean people can bring bad news

that someone died. You should wait with such news till after the wedding" (Informant #3).

A special group of omens were natural ones. Although the informants provided contradictory interpretations it was clear that they considered weather itself as a foreteller of the success of a future marriage. A clear nice day was always interpreted as a good sign: "It was January, but it was so warm – we almost wore shoes. And our life turned out to be that way" (Informant #3). But rain was interpreted in both ways: according to the law of similarity it could either bring wealth since everything grows after the rain, or it could foretell unhappy marital life of a wife: "Snow had started when I married, and all my life I was in tears" (Informant #2); "It is bad when it is raining that day. They say a bride will cry as a wife" (Informant #3); "It depends on weather. If it is raining a little bit that day, they say a couple will be wealthy" (Informant #6).

Village dwellers, however, feared human purposeful harm more than the appearance of natural omens. They were absolutely sure a wedding never occurred without bad things caused by jealous humans: "There exists no place free from bad people!" (Informant #2). My informants were unanimous in their belief that there were magical, non-material influences dangerous for the wedded couple that came from other people. In this respect they were particularly concerned about the evil eye: "There are people who have the evil eye. Maybe they do not want to harm anyone, but they have such bad eyes… They can even ruin a marriage…Maybe some girl loved that groom, but he did not marry her. Then she can do something…she can go to sorcerers… If you manage to meet a sorcerer, who cast the evil eye on you, he will over-turn it, but if not… There are no sorcerers in our village but they are in the <Carpathian> mountains" (Informant #2); "I

believe in that! People can purposefully do something. They can cast the evil eye. They can say 'How beautiful she <the bride> is,' and she will get sick. They can secretly throw something during the wedding; they can put dirt from a grave under the couples' feet when they walk or sit at the table" (Informant #3); "Mean people can give them sunflower seeds to gnaw on, and they will not live well. Someone gave them to my friend at her wedding and she did not even remember who it was. And they have been fighting all the time since then. Oh, there are lots of things that can be done! They can toss soil on the couple or they put a wreath that is turned around on a bride's head, or they can twist the bouquet on a groom's jacket. Anyone can do it out of envy. Even a sister or a female friend" (Informant #4); "Oh, I do believe in the evil eye! There is such a negative energy, and you can't avoid it - it is natural…" (Informant #5).

To counterbalance negative influences, to escape from evil, a wedded couple protected itself as assiduously as it could: "They put garlic in their pockets and attach a safety pin. When a bride exits the house, an ax and a broom are put on the threshold and she jumps over them, and parents sprinkle her with blessed water" (Informant #2); "They should wear amulets. And parents should pray during the wedding" (Informant #3); "You can wear a safety pin so as not be affected by the evil eye" (Informant #4); "For protection there should be a safety pin turned with its head down and against the naked body" (Informant #5); "Both a bride and a groom should wear something old in their attire. I do not know why. Maybe for the evil eye not to affect them" (Informant #6); "They make a roll out of paper, put pieces of garlic, wheat grains, honey or sugar, and a coin inside, put golden wrap around and stick it all with honey and put into the bouquet

on his <the groom's> chest and into her <the bride's> wreath so that the couple would not be evileyed and their life would be sweet" (Informant #6).

There were also some magical actions suggested by the informants that were supposed to make the couple love each other more. The guests usually yell "*Hirko*!" ("Bitter!") long enough for the couple to kiss thus proving their love. Another method suggested was the couple should wash each other in a special way: "They take a *kvitka*,[14] put it into a bowl full of water, and wash each other's faces" (Informant #2). Sticking some objects with honey like in the paragraph above might have the same meaning: according to the law of similarity the couple would stick together and their life would be as sweet as honey.

It can easily be concluded that Ukrainian villagers took into consideration magic signs that were quite numerous during weddings. For them, the magical interpretation of events predominated, and they highly valued traditional magic knowledge. The interviewees tended to support their beliefs with examples from either personal experience or that of the "known others." Even when they said they were not sure if some omens were true or not that hesitation seemed to be rather about their interviewer's believing, i.e., they were not sure that their stories were quite convincing for me but they themselves did believe. Villagers attributed supernatural protective qualities to various objects like a safety pins, red thread, salt, garlic, etc. For this group, there existed no conflicts between their religiosity and magic beliefs and practices.

[14] In western part of Ukraine, the word *kvitka* refers not to a flower but to a wedding tree, *hil'tse*.

2.2.2 Urban group

The following table shows the basic data about Ukrainian informants living in towns or cities.

Table 2. Married Ukrainian Urban Informants

	Sex	Region	DOB	DOM
Interviewee #1	F	CU	1962	1987
Interviewee #2	F	EU	1975	1998
Interviewee #3	F	EU	1975	2003
Interviewee #4	F	EU	1940	1964

Key: CU – Central Ukraine

The Ukrainian urban dwellers in my sample had strong ties with the village. Although all of them had some education beyond high school (Informants #2 and #3 had University degrees) and apartments in the cities they, however, could not be considered urban dwellers to the full extent. Only Informant #2 was truly urban: she had several generations of ancestors who were part of the urban intelligentia and were teachers. She was very skeptical about folk traditions and rituals, and commented on them with irony. My other informants became urban dwellers only after they had graduated from school and moved to the urban settings to get their degrees. They had parents and close relatives in villages and spent most of their summers and weekends working on the farm and garden and helping around the household. Therefore, their worldviews were very much affected by their rural background.

To a large extent, the urban dwellers took information on wedding omens from books or magazines, and they often indicated they read something about the topic in

question. They appropriated printed beliefs, which were for them as trustworthy as those heard from or practiced by others. The source of knowledge did not seem to influence the degree of believing.

Among Ukrainian urban dwellers only Informant #2 did not have a *korovai* at her wedding. This was due to a lack of time because her groom had to depart from Ukraine for diplomatic work abroad. Her wedding therefore was compressed to the ceremony in ZAHS followed by a couple of hours celebration in a café instead of the traditional 2-3 day celebration. When asked why she did not try to have a *korovai* for her wedding, she expressed sincere surprise: "What is it for? I did not even think it was necessary." Informants #2 and #3 had their weddings organized and celebrated outside their homes, in cafés. Informants #1 and #4 had quite traditional wedding ceremonies at home, in their native villages, and they had a *korovai* made by relatives, while Informant #3 bought it from a café. None of them knew the ritual of *korovai* baking but they had ideas about its meaning: "It <the *korovai*> symbolizes wealth, well-being. Bread is generally the basis of life. Probably it should be baked with feelings, thus making an impact on future happiness" (Informant #3). Informant #1 remembered that there were coins put into dough of her *korovai* for happiness. All three informants shared the *korovai* at the wedding with the guests and ate all of it by the end.

Informant #2 was not showered at her wedding and though was able to explain the meaning of the action from her observations of other peoples' weddings. According to her it was done for ensuring a sweet and wealthy life of the couple. Her ironic comment about it confirms a rational worldview: "A sweet and wealthy life does not depend on the grains or candies tossed at you." The rest of the group was showered with candies, rye,

and coins, and the action was accompanied with verbalized wishes for happiness, wealth, love, and joy in their marital life. Showering happened upon the couples' exit from ZAHS. In this case, ZAHS took on the function of a church, and the magic action of showering the couples on its front steps was logical.

Stepping on a *rushnyk* took place for all informants but #4. At the time she was marrying, she said, that was not a custom. In her mind, the action was connected to a church wedding, not a civil one. Similar to the rural group, the urban informants associated the *rushnyk* with a road and human fate so that a *rushnyk* was compared to a new road and a new fate, and a road spread itself before people like a *rushnyk* inviting them to step on it, to start a journey: "People step on the *rushnyk* for happiness and good luck" (Informant #1); "It is a road of new family life" (Informant #3)[15]. Only Informants #2 and #3 knew about the omen of stepping first on a *rushnyk*. They, however, displayed opposite attitudes toward believing in this omen: "Yes, we stepped on a *rushnyk*, but I do not trust any of those <folk> traditions. My mom and several friends told me about it, and it was they who watched the moment carefully" (Informant #2); "I kept in mind that whoever steps first would become the head of the family, but we stepped together. Our family is egalitarian" (Informant #3).

Informants provided other examples of predicting who would be the head of the family. Informant #1 got an apple she had to eat with her groom in front of the guests taking turns; they were supposed to leave nothing, meaning they ate even the seeds. And the one whose bite was last would be the head. Informant #3 had to bite a *korovai* with

[15] Standard interpretation of *rushnyk* as a symbol of road and good luck can be attributed to a popular Ukrainian song called "A Song about a *Rushnyk*" by A. Malyshko. A son sings how his mother was seeing him away for a far distance to cover: «You were seeing me off at the dawn /And gave me an embroidered rushnyk for happiness and good luck/I will spread that rushnyk as if it were a fate…" Obviously, because of the direct association with a *rushnyk* this song is often performed at weddings.

her groom: who would bite a bigger piece of it would be the head of the family. Her piece was bigger but she stated that they had egalitarian relations.

Neither Informant #1 nor #4 tossed a bouquet to the unmarried girls at their weddings. Informant #2 depicted a situation when she had to yield to the settled rules: "I gave my bouquet to the hands of a girl, who wished to marry soon. No, I personally do not believe in that, but she did." Informant #3 tossed her bouquet and said she believed "50/50" in effectiveness of the action. In no case did the groom perform any action facilitating the marriage of the bachelors.

Among omens that would predict the quality of the couple's marital life Informant #2 refused to admit "civil" folk ones: "During the church wedding some omens may appear and I would consider those, not at a regular wedding in ZAHS… I did it <civil registration> only to satisfy my parents. If something happens in church the couple should ask the priest about the meaning of an omen. If he says there is no bad meaning in it they should trust him." Rain as a natural omen did not mean anything to her, as well as the fact that she first spotted her wedding skirt with champagne and then they forgot a case with champagne at home. To her, none of those events during the wedding day meant or predicted anything bad. For Informant #3 a good omen became the fact that the date of her wedding coincided with a church holiday: "When we chose the day for the wedding I did not know it was a church holiday. And later on I thought that maybe in this way God's gratitude will spread on my marriage." Informant #3 implied that knowing omens was a special skill: "Maybe there are sorcerers who know <about omens> but I do not. They say raining on that day is a good omen." For Informant #1 a bad omen was the fact that she was hurrying during the wedding day and "ran ahead" of her groom. She

was told later that she should not have run ahead or else she would "run" in her marriage. She confessed that her marriage was not a happy one, and she actually had to do more work than her husband; she literally had to "rush ahead" of the rest of the family. Informant #3 stated it was a bad omen to marry on a leap year: "I heard people prefer to marry not on a leap year. And the weddings of the siblings are supposed to take place on different years." All informants knew and some believed it was a bad omen to forget something and return home on a wedding day: "My mom really believes in that, she never returns back if she forgets something. And I do not care about it" (Informant #2); "They say you must not return back. The best man or the bridesmaid have to do it" (Informant #1); "I do not like to return back anyway… I heard if there is still a great need to return in the house, you have to look in the mirror in order to neutralize negative consequences" (Informant #2).

All four informants accepted black attire as appropriate for a wedding, which was a noticeable shift away from the rural group: "You can wear black dress <for a wedding> if it is dressy, even though it is a color of mourning in Ukraine" (Informant #1); "I do not see any particular bad sign in a black dress. Nowadays it is an evening dress and if it <the wedding> is a party, somebody can come in a black dress" (Informant #2).

Informants #1, #2, and #3 did not show their wedding dresses to their grooms but their motivations differed: "I do not know… I was told that if the couple sees each other <in wedding attire> before the wedding they will separate" (Informant #1); "He did not see my outfit for technical reasons. I read in books about hiding a dress before the wedding, but I do not see any omen in that. It is just more interesting when he does not

know how she will look like" (Informant #2); "I hid my dress because he must not see it before" (Informant #3).

Informant #3 still kept her wedding gown and veil. She believed that giving them away would cause misfortune: "I heard that you can lend your gown to others but never your veil: something bad can happen, separation can happen." She also believed in a special power of that veil: "This veil is a good means of pacifying a crying baby when you have it. If it cries you just cover the cradle with your veil, and the baby will calm down" (Informant #3).

All informants received wishes for many children at their weddings in front of all the guests, and they all expressed concerns about doing any preparations before the birth of a baby: "We were waiting till birth and did not really buy anything" (Informant #1); "I heard it is a bad omen to prepare for baby's birth in advance... I did not do much preparation because my mom believes in all those omens, and she said she would do everything herself" (Informant #2); "You must not celebrate the baby before its birth. I heard it is a bad omen" (Informant #3); "I did not buy anything beforehand: it is a bad omen" (Informant #4). Same responses were made about presenting baby clothes as a wedding gift: "No, I think you should not <present> beforehand. You can wish them children, but to present clothes for yet unborn children...it may be a bad sign" (Informant #4).

They were very particular about the wedding gifts that must not be presented at the weddings: "Forks and knives must not be presented to a couple or else they will live all their life 'on knives'" (Informant #1); "There is a belief that you should not present knives to close people because it can lead to some quarrel, some conflict" (Informant #2);

"I wouldn't be happy to get knives, wrist watches or something connected to fire like a lighter. I heard about those objects, and I have examples from my own life that they cause separation with the people who presented them. But in this case <the wedding> separation can happen between those to whom they are presented. So it is better to be overcautious. God helps the cautious" (Informant #3); "I read that knives must not be given as a present" (Informant #4).

Another belief united the urban informants – a belief in the evil eye and both human and supernatural malevolent forces able to harm. All females believed that a wedding was a special space and time when those forces could work with extreme effectiveness: "I believe there are evil forces. They can ruin the marriage. <Evil people> can even go to a witch for that" (Informant #1); "I do believe there are people with mean eyes… and there is a folk belief that those people can affect not only wedding, but generally human health… And if you do not have strong protection, the evil eye affects you" (Informant #2); I do believe people can <harm> in any way they want! After forty two years of marriage I can believe in anything. <In response to the question if somebody did evil to her at her wedding:> And what do you think?! We lived well only eleven years <after the wedding>, then my brother died, and I became…as if I was cursed, just as if I was cursed…Only 11 years there was the <good> life. Not only strangers can <harm>, anybody can harm out of envy!" (Informant #4); "Yes, of course! Something can happen to the kitchen utensils, for example forks can be put at an acute angle; a pin can be tied to a dress with vicious intentions and special incantations… There were people at our wedding who could have wished us ill, and strange events started in a year. I could not

find any explanation for them, but I have no doubt it was due to the interference of evil people" (Informant #3).

Informant #3 said: "When something bad happens you immediately try to recall what exactly could have happened, what and when caused it." She then provided a detailed story about her struggle to preserve her family against the evil forces oppressing her husband and which, she stated, manifested themselves through the suspicious events happening one after another. First, a beggar thanked her for money saying: "May God give you good health, and may God grant your husband the heavenly kingdom." Then a family friend asked the Informant's husband to try on a costume for her deceased husband. According to the Informant, such an action was extremely unusual in itself and dangerous for her husband's health and even life. After that her husband started behaving like a zombie. Absolutely desperate, the Informant went to a *babka*, who diagnosed that her husband was evileyed, his guardian angel had left him, and he had no vital strength to live. She told the Informant to light three candles in three different churches to cure her husband, and pray all the time.

Trying to protect themselves during the wedding, the informants used some actions for good luck as well as actions directed to ward off evil forces: "I put a coin in my shoe, and I had a safety pin in my dress and a needle with a red thread" (Informant #1); "If you live by the laws of Orthodoxy, the evil eye will not affect you. I did not do anything physical for protection or happiness. I heard about having something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue, but I did not do it" (Informant #2); "I was blessed with an icon. Then I put my baptism cross on a safety pin and tied it to the hem… I do not know, probably there are some precise rules for that but I sincerely tried

to do what my heart told me. In the morning, I washed my face with blessed water, prayed so that nothing bad would happen during the wedding, and to have no bad thoughts" (Informant #3). Informant #4 stated that she found instructions on protection in books long after her wedding, and that nowadays people were more cautious than before by preventing potential evil-doers from entering their dwellings: "Well, now we all know about it <possible protection>. Nowadays we have lots of books on this, and back in that time there was nothing. Now people try to arrange weddings in cafés, restaurants, or eateries, i.e., far from their homes. And people are smarter now than they used to be forty two years ago: the couples often buy separate apartments so that no strangers would walk in <to harm>."

In summary, Ukrainian urban dwellers were more likely to arrange weddings as they wanted. They tended to arrange celebrations in urban restaurants or cafés where only pre-selected people would go. They had to buy ritual bread the production of which in cities is well marketed. Urban dwellers tended to select the elements from a traditional Ukrainian wedding to include in their own ceremony if they were "civilized," and excluded those they viewed as 'too rural.'[16] There was, however, one magical action that could not be – quite ironically – avoided even if the urban Ukrainians had only a registration ceremony in ZAHS. It was stepping on a *rushnyk* that now is an obligatory element of any officially registered wedding.

It seems that rural background or live connections with village predisposed the degree of believing in the world of supernatural. Informant #2 was a vivid example of

[16] For example, *tsyhanshchyna*, a mock wedding, that usually takes place in villages on the second day of the wedding (and usually it is Sunday) almost never takes place at urban weddings. Probably because of its frivolous tone that is so much enjoyed in villages, the mock wedding is considered too vulgar and primitive to be performed enthusiastically in the urban setting.

that. It was easier for a city couple, disconnected from the traditional agrarian roots and tuned to the modern rhythms of life, to eliminate whatever was not a part of their upbringing, of everyday experience or their in-groups beliefs. City people were eager to create theories about some particular omen or belief looking for rational explanation of the traditional rituals. But even Informant #2 demonstrated the power of the belief system around her. Her responses showed that nobody is immune from the popular folk beliefs with their magic prescriptions and taboos. Even within one family there can be believers and non-believers, and non-believers often have to modify their behaviors in accordance with the magical worldviews of people around them.

2.2.3 Divorced group

The following table presents basic sociological information on the divorced Ukrainians. This subgroup includes both villagers and urban dwellers. Out of five informants only Informant #4 remarried after her divorce.

Table 3. Ukrainian Divorced Informants

	Sex	Region	DOB	DOM
Interviewee #1	F	EU	1963	1986
Interviewee #2	F	CU	1971	1998
Interviewee #3	F	EU	1953	1978
Interviewee #4	F	EU	1974	1994
Interviewee #5	F	EU	1970	1990

In this group, only Interviewee #5 significantly differed from the rest in her answers. She was raised as an Evangelical Christian Baptist by her parents and stressed that in their house nothing of folk traditions or beliefs was maintained. Her wedding had some traditional folk elements only "to please the groom's family who were not believers."

The most characteristic feature of the rest of the group was the abundance of examples and strong belief that interference of evil forces caused the failure of their marriages. The words of Informant #3 from the Urban Group explain their way of thinking best: "When something bad happens you immediately try to recall what exactly could have happened, what and when caused it."

Out of five divorced Ukrainians only Informant #3 (who was an urban dweller) did not have a *korovai* because, at the time she married, folk elements at weddings were repressed by the Soviets. The rest of the group had ritual bread. It was not, however, baked by the relatives but bought. They could nevertheless speculate about its meaning: "The *korovai* symbolizes wealth" (Informant #1); "The *korovai* is like a full goblet" (Informant #2); "The *korovai* is a symbol of health and life" (Informant #3); "Here in Ukraine people always greet you with bread and salt. So it is used for greeting a new family" (Informant #4). Only Informant #1 knew some beliefs connected to the *korovai*: "If it rises and then settles – marital life will be similar. And if it cracks <the couple> will separate. If we would bake it at home, it would probably turn out cracked." All the informants who had the *korovai* shared it with the guests and ate it.

All five informants were showered with grains, coins, or candies outside of either their houses or the ZAHS building. Informant #5 found this ritual redundant: "There is no

sense in it. It is all pagan." Others however connected it directly, through the law of similarity, to future wealth: "We were wished wealth, happiness, and fortune so that we would not be poor" (Informant #1); "It symbolizes wealth, well-being of the future family. The main thing about it is to shower abundantly: as much grain and coins as possible. Small children will later collect and count the money. The more they collect the better for the well-being of the future family" (Informant #4).

Each informant had a *rushnyk* and stepped on it in ZAHS. Each one knew about the divination of leadership in the family and behaved accordingly to their wishes. The comments of Informant #4 testify that not only females held that belief and strived for power: "I believe in that, and my grandma told me to step first. But we stepped simultaneously, with the right foot" (Informant #1); "I remembered about the belief but we stepped on at the same time" (Informant #2); "I heard about 'who steps first' and I tried to step first. <She continues with a bitter smile, SK> As a result, I used to think for both of us, I used to be the money-earner, the feeder, and he enjoyed a carefree life" (Informant #3); "I knew about it, but I did not try to step first. I prefer marital equality. Therefore I tried to have us step together, but I noticed how much my husband wanted to step first" (Informant #4); "Everybody was watching carefully to see if I would step on first and with which foot. Whoever steps first will rule the family" (Informant #5).

Among other actions believed to predict the head of the family Informants #2 and #4 indicated biting the *korovai*. Both drew a connection between the action that looked funny and entertaining and their real lives: "I bit a bigger piece. Probably I wanted to be the head… and this is how it turned out to be" (#2); "The *korovai* is used to find out who

will become the head of the family, who will take a bigger bite. And he did. Well, I wish you saw his <big> mouth…" (#4)

Only Informant #4 tossed her bouquet to unmarried girls at her wedding: "It is done to determine who will marry next. Yes, I believe in that." Informant #2 did not toss it only because the *tamada* (the master of the ceremonies at the banquet) did not signal for her to do so, but she also believed that the girl catching the bouquet would marry soon. Other informants stated the action was not common when they married: "There was no such custom at that time. People began doing it after American movies were introduced on our TV" (Informant #5).

All informants believed it was possible to ruin a marriage through either natural or supernatural means, and they specifically talked about the evil eye: "Of course people can ruin a marriage by presenting some gift with evil intentions…There are many such people and you have to be cautious. They can do anything! My grandma told me that some girl hated the groom because he promised to marry her but did not. She came to his wedding in dirty clothes, and ever since his life with his wife has been bad. It is prohibited for others to pass between the couple. They should keep their hands locked all the time. God forbid they break their hands apart and let someone pass between them!" (Informant #1); "I was thinking about it a lot… We got a set of bed linens, and everything there was sown together which was weird. I remember it caused me doubts. There are witches who cast the evil eye and know incantations to ruin marital life. Maybe somebody did not want us to marry. People differ, and some of them did not share our happiness" (Informant #2); "There exist such <malignant> forces, <they> exist. I read <about them> in the newspapers" (Informant #3); "I personally did not have encounters

with such things but I read a lot about them. It is rather mean people than some <abstract> force" (Informant #4); "I believe there are mean people who can affect <a marriage> if the couple do not believe in God but instead feel threatened by the dark forces. Therefore, according to their faith, something bad can happen to them. Those are such people… rather wizards and witches who are paid for doing their evil work" (Informant #5).

When asked about anything that predicted their own divorce, the informants had their answers ready for me. No matter how many years after the wedding day, they talked about them at length, as if everything happened just recently. Their stories about omens were very convincing and detailed, and they were mostly about bad omens and taboos: "The engagement was unlucky: he was late by an hour. We stopped waiting. And he came with only his mother and a friend while there were supposed to be matchmakers! For the engagement, there are supposed to be a married man and a woman who would be the age of my parents. And he came without a *rushnyk*! I did not like it. I believe in omens. I thought 'This is not right! It is not the way people do it!' When the groom came to my house on the wedding day, the neighbors put a long stick with two empty buckets on the ends to bar his way at the gate. He was supposed to put money in one bucket and some alcohol in the other. And he sneaked in from the garden side! Therefore, there was no purchase of the bride, and the buckets remained empty. I was very upset. I told him: 'It is not the way people do it!' I remember I had a thought at that moment that I would not live long with him because <people> were rushing in front of me with those empty buckets… And then he stumbled when we exited the yard. It is an indication of bad luck, and women there noticed that. Also, it is a bad omen to forget something, and we forgot

our passports. My mom then returned and brought them. You know, she had looked at me in the morning of that day and said: 'You will live with him for maybe five years." She has that sixth sense, you know, and she was right. Besides, we were marrying on June 21st, and this is the day when the <Second World> War started. So, we were fighting all the way through, all five years" (Informant #1); "A wedding must not happen during Lent or on September 11, the Day of Beheading of John the Baptist. Our wedding was on September 12, and on September 11 they made all the preparations; they cut water-melons and cabbages.[17] Maybe this has affected... Then I read that a bride should not wear pearls. Pearls symbolize tears. That's what happened... They say you should keep your wedding gown to the end. I spotted it with candle wax in the church. I did not know, maybe there was some kind of omen in that, but I had nobody to ask about it. I also know it is a bad omen when a bride spots her dress with wine; and you should not turn around after exiting ZAHS. It is generally a bad omen to return back" (Informant #2); "They say the first half of the wedding day stands for the bride, the second half for the groom, and the second day <of the wedding celebration> stands for their future marital life. Probably it is true. I married on January 14, the day was sunny, everything looked like in a fairy tale, but by 9 PM it was pouring, and the very next day there was a strong frost. And that's how it all was: tears and cold all my life... I did not pay attention on that day, but *later on I was analyzing* it [italics mine, SK]. That's true though: whatever the omen is, life will turn to be that way. They say it is a bad omen if you forget something, but I did not forget anything. The groom, however, was late by 1.5 hours. Probably that's when his

[17] According to the Orthodox Church tradition, nothing resembling human head should be cut on that day as well as nothing of red color should be cooked because it resembles blood of John the Baptist. The most faithful prefer to completely abstain from using knives that day (Bogatyrev, 1998 [1929], p. 78; Voropai, 1958, V.2, p. 240).

character became apparent. I was so nervous… They also say that when the couple walks nobody must come between them, separate them" (Informant #3); "There are many omens. For example, rain during wedding is a bad one. On the other hand, it is good… Probably omens depend on what the guests want. Nobody except for the bride should wear white, and nobody should wear black because it is a color of mourning. Nobody should cross the path of the couple, and nobody should start dancing before the couple. There are many omens connected to her <the bride's> dress: she should not show it to the groom before the wedding. I had several omens during my first wedding that sort of predicted that we are not destined for each other. First of all, my future mother-in-law sewed my dress. My future husband saw it. It was decorated with thirteen fabric roses. Even then I understood it was not good. And I had noticed it just accidentally! And there was a weird extra-long fabric belt that I could wind up three times around my waist… and the first person to try that dress on before me was my future husband's divorced sister[18]… Another thing – the couple should not turn back. It is a bad omen, especially on a wedding day" (Informant #4); "The only thing I can remember was that my grandma stepped on my dress and tore it at the bottom. But I do not relate that <event> to my divorce. The only reason I am divorced was that I did not follow the God's word. And those omens… they are simply superstitions… I sold my dress to a neighbor girl. Well, she later divorced and abandoned her child. I do not relate it to my dress either, but superstitious people would say: 'Aha! This confirms our beliefs: If only would you buy a new dress you would not divorce!'" (Informant #5)

[18] Contrasting her two weddings, the Informant said about her second wedding dress: "A very nice lady made it. I just felt I trusted her totally. It is important that the good hands make it <the dress>."

Speaking about other things prohibited at weddings, the informants underlined gifts: "Knives are prohibited because they will live 'on knives' all their life; mirrors, baby clothes, and artificial flowers – these are bad omens to get" (Informant #1); "Children's clothes must not be presented because it is possible to cause the couple not to have children; it is possible to read some incantations over those clothes. And they say sharp objects are bad gifts: they will live 'on knives'" (Informant #2); "Children's clothes are an absolute no!" (Informant #3); "Wrist watches are not good: they start to count down time allotted to the couple. We were not presented watches, probably everybody knew about this belief. Knives are an absolute no! The couple should buy them themselves or you have to pay back a small symbolic sum of money if you get knives. Children's clothes – never! The only thing you can present for the future babies is money accompanied by wishes to have many kids" (Informant #4); "Well, I know that knives are not supposed to be presented. Sharp objects mean you'll become furious. I personally would be thankful if someone would give me knives as a present, but when I have to choose a gift <for others> I have to keep this superstition in mind. And you can't present wrist watches. It is sort of <believed that> time starts moving too fast <for the couple>" (Informant #5).

The informants knew the means of protection from possible misfortune or the evil eye and they performed some actions for good luck: "I put a safety pin on my dress, and I was sprinkled with blessed water. I also put a coin in my shoe for good luck" (Informant #1); "Do not invite people whom you do not know well and who are envious, only very close friends and relatives; do not arrange a big wedding or else people will be jealous. For good luck, I tried to have something old, something new, something borrowed, and

something my own in my attire. We also broke our glasses for good luck…There should be no black clothes at a wedding. A wedding is not a funeral" (Informant #2); "People break china for good luck" (Informant #3); "Everything in a bride's attire must be new. And I had it all new. Also, I wore a safety pin that day. In fact, I always wear it. For good luck you have to break some china into small pieces. The more pieces the happier the couple will be" (Informant #4); "Nobody except for Jesus Christ can protect the couple! Well, <people> go to a witch who somehow protects, but it will not save their lives. What is the sense of speaking about the couple's protection if they do not believe in God?! Any quarrel then may lead to a divorce. I did not do anything for good luck at my wedding. I did not know anything of that stuff before. All knowledge I have now came later. I was not taught those… superstitions in my family" (Informant #5).

A separate topic full of precautions and taboos for the informants of this group was future children and preparations for their birth. All the informants were wished many children at their weddings. With the exception of Informant #5 who was very skeptical about any folk beliefs, the rest of the group took the matter more than seriously, especially Informant #4 who was seven months pregnant at the time of the interview, and seemed to be very happy in her second marriage: "You know, husbands usually want to have sons… There is a belief you must not buy anything before the baby is born. And I am not buying anything. You can do a tour around the shops to pick out something but not buy or - what is even worse - keep it at home. Some complications with pregnancy or delivery can happen. I do not cut my hair because they say I would 'cut' the baby's intellect. You should not step over a cat or else you will stop the growth of the baby. You should not kick a cat with your foot or else there will be extra hair on the baby's body.

And do not tell anyone that you are leaving for the delivery or else you will have a very difficult one. And I have a special prayer for pregnant women with me all the time; it protects me." Other informants were not so detailed since childbirth was not so immediate for them. Their answers, however, supported the words of Informant #4: "I kept that in mind. I did not buy anything before the birth. Maybe this is just a superstition but you should not do anything before birth. Something bad can happen to the baby" (Informant #1); "I did not prepare anything for the birth of the first baby. It is a bad sign to buy anything beforehand. Anything can happen, and even the baby can be lost" (Informant #3); "I did not do anything beforehand. They say it is a bad omen to buy everything a baby needs before the birth" (Informant #2); "I heard about that belief but I bought everything myself before the birth" (Informant #5).

This group was of a special interest for the research because, in the eyes of Ukrainians, a person who was divorced represented some misfortune, pathology, undesirable outcome. In contemporary Ukrainian cities divorces occur often. In villages they occur as well, but are still rather exceptional. Instead, matters of economic survival and strict village morals make couples preserve their marriages, even unhappy ones. Usually explanations for such marriages are sought in the wedding day. People always try to determine the reason for a divorce, and, if it is attributed to black magic, that becomes a good excuse for the divorce and people have sympathy for the divorced individual. It seems that personal predispositions do not matter much. In peoples' minds, the ability to be happily married lies outside of the sphere of their power. Instead, it depends on numerous external factors. People who came through a divorce tend to look back on the day of their wedding or pre-wedding events in an attempt to notice, post hoc, any omens

that predicted the failure of the marriage. The more they think about those indicators the more of them they notice: the slightest detail becomes a bad omen. The answers provided by the group give a feeling of how strongly people, who faced personal misfortunes, believe in supernatural forces and in the practical possibility of falling victim to these forces, especially at weddings.

2.2.4. Clergy group

The following table presents not only basic information on the priests but on their churches as well. Different church denominations might become an independent variable for possible studies on magic beliefs in the clergymen.

Table 4. Married Ukrainian Priests

	Sex	Region	Church	DOB	DOM
Informant #1	M	WU	UOM	1959	1980
Informant #2	M	CU	UGC	1969	1995
Informant #3	M	CU	UGC	1964	1997
Informant #4	M	WU	UGC	1960	1985
Informant #5	M	EU	UOM	1971	1994

Key: UOM – Ukrainian Orthodox Church under Moscow Patriarchy; UGC – Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

This group was supposed to significantly differ from others. First, it is composed of males only. The average age of marriage was 25.6 years. Secondly, all of them had church weddings unlike the informants from other groups. Thirdly, the worldview of the

priests who received a special higher theological education was supposed to be different from that of lay people. On the one hand, the priests spread God's word in their churches and were not supposed to support folk superstitions. On the other hand, the church recognizes the devil's existence and his active attempts to harm people's lives and faith. Despite the common unifying factor, religious world view, this group was not homogeneous either. The main difference was a degree of tolerance toward folk beliefs in representatives of two denominations of Ukrainian Church: the priests educated under the guidance of Moscow Patriarchy tended to demonstrate more rigid answers (Informant #1 and #5), while the Greek-Catholic priests tended to be more flexible with interpretation of religious dogmas.

Informant #2 was the only one in the group who did not have a *korovai* at his wedding. His wedding was organized in a rush because of his urgent departure for missionary service; therefore it had very few traditional elements in it. The rest of the group had *korovai*, and it was baked by female relatives. None knew about the traditional rituals of *korovai* baking, but the symbolism of a *korovai* was explained by them in similar ways: "The *korovai* is bread, and bread is life, a symbol of life. It is used to bless a couple for a long life" (Informant #1); "The *korovai* is a symbol of life and wealth, of marital harmony. I do not know any beliefs related to the *korovai* but I know that <families> are happy when it turns out fine. They hire knowledgeable people for that" (Informant #3); "The *korovai* is a symbol of wealth and is used for blessing" (Informant #5). All informants shared their *korovai* with the guests, and ate the whole bread.

Showering of the couple took place in each case except with Informant #2, for the reason stated above. The rest got showered, and there was little variation in terms of

substances used: "Before we went for the wedding we were showered with rye grains and sugar. Rye is a symbol of life; therefore they wished us a sweet life. They also sprinkled us with blessed water. Coins or candies are not used in our locale, but as far as I understand you wish the same thing – a wealthy and sweet life - to the couple" (Informant #1); "We were showered with grains, candies, and blessed water. Grain is a symbol of life that dies and is reborn. It is one of the folk customs. Such things are valuable to us since they are the source of our general culture. The Church does not oppose them as long as they do not contradict a Christian ideal of the family" (Informant #3); "We used candies and wheat grains but it was us, the couple, who tossed them to the guests, not vice versa" (Informant #4); "<They> tossed money, candies, and wheat grains, and wished us all possible earthly good" (Informant #5). Interestingly, priests often hold erroneous beliefs. Informant #5 considered showering a feature not common in the eastern part of Ukraine: "In the Donbass, showering happens only if a couple is from the western part of Ukraine."

All the priests stepped on the *rushnyk* at their weddings, and all have been keeping them since that day. The symbolism of the *rushnyk*, however, was interpreted differently and the explanations implied that it was not a church tradition to step on the *rushnyk*: "The *rushnyk* is a symbol of a bride's chastity" (Informant #1); "The wedding *rushnyk* is a symbol of a common life path" (Informant #2); "It is a folk custom" (Informant #3).

Informant #4 did not know at the time of interview about a folk belief related to the *rushnyk* and securing the dominating role. Others demonstrated a negative attitude towards the belief since it contradicted church dogma about female subordination: "To

step first on a *rushnyk*? It is a superstition. I did not know at that time if I had to step on it first or second… I guess we stepped together. According to the church laws a man must be the head of the family" (Informant #1); "From my own practice I see that brides try to step on first, but I ask couples to do it together. Christian marriage does not allow domination or lordship. People believe in that <sign> but I as a priest consider it a superstition, and it is a sin to believe in it. There are different customs: people put money under the *rushnyk* to ensure the well-being <of a couple>. It is also a superstition. I do not want to upset or school anyone, that's why I say: 'If you wish you can put <something> under <the *rushnyk*>, but it is a superstition, and it is a sin, therefore you can even do harm in this way… Sometimes people may want to stick all sorts of things under the *rushnyk*" (Informant #2); "In a Christian family, a husband is the head. He bears the main responsibility for the family, for its peace and harmony. I know about 'who steps first' but it is a superstition" (Informant #3); "My attitude is negative. Remember 'Who would be the first will be the last" <citation from the Bible>. When I wed couples I ask them to step simultaneously" (Informant #5).

Even though Informant #2 was not showered at his wedding, his thoughts about the ritual itself are extremely interesting and exemplary in terms of how selective and individualized the attitude toward church and folk practices can be: "Yes, of course. As a rule <couples> are showered upon exiting the church with grains, flowers, or candies. Grain is a symbol of generosity, wealth. Flowers symbolize love, tenderness. Candies mean 'may your life together be sweet.' Folk practices are not allowed inside the church, but they can take place on the church threshold or on the way home. The church does not prohibit showering a couple with something but only outside, not during the church

ceremony. Is showering a superstition like putting money under the *rushnyk*? Not necessarily. It <showering> is an ancient ritual. The church itself uses grains for blessing. But if we already wish wealth by showering there is no need to put money under *rushnyk*. We never prohibit showering per se. We do not see any problem in that. The couples do not complain about those who were showered before them, and we do not want to ban this <ritual> because it does not bother anyone."

Because of the hasty wedding Informant #2 did not perform any actions for predicting the marriage of female or male wedding guests, and his bride did not have a traditional veil. The other four informants performed some actions for that purpose. What united all these informants were their opinions that those actions are superstitions and not worthy of belief: "She tossed her bouquet and danced over her veil so those girls would marry. I do not believe in that, and I did not do anything for the unmarried men" (Informant #1); "The bride tossed her veil. Whoever catches it will marry soon. I do not believe in that. To believe in <folk> customs is to waste your faith. But we can consider folk customs as our cultural heritage. It makes the wedding more interesting and joyful" (Informant #3); "She tossed her bouquet and danced over her veil. There is a folk belief that a girl who catches the bride's bouquet will marry sooner. It is done just to make the wedding livelier. I did not do anything for the men" (Informant #4); "When they take the veil off the bride dances over her wreath. I do not know why it is done. It is just a custom; in our locale they do it. As for me, I did not do anything for the men" (Informant #5).

Similarly, the priests' attitudes towards omens appearing on a wedding day differed: "Folk say if it is raining that day the couple will be wealthy" (Informant #1); "There was a little rain. People say – they will be wealthy: it is a sign of God's blessing

and generosity. But if it is pouring they say the couple will cry. You need to look closely <at omens>, but not to believe in it 100%" (Informant #3); "The day was sunny. As for rain…I do not know. I do not pay attention to those superstitions" (Informant #4); "I think that rain on a wedding day is a big gift from God for the couple" (Informant #5).

Judging folk customs from the religious point of view the priests denigrated most omens of both bad and good luck. For them, being a faithful Christian meant to be above folk beliefs. And yet contradictions in their answers testified that rejection of folk beliefs was not complete: "A black dress does not mean a bad sign. If people come to the wedding when 40 days after a funeral are over they can throw 40 coins back over their shoulders. It is called 'to cut mourning off.' After that they can dance at a wedding. If a wedding and a funeral meet in the street…well, what would you do? Half of the world dances and another half cries… It is a superstition that you should not turn back if you forgot something… I did not do anything for good luck because at that time I was already in a seminary. If God sends you happiness you will have it without that" (Informant #1); "My bride hid her dress, I did not see it. Probably it is connected to some belief; otherwise I would be invited for a try on…Generally speaking, all those beliefs – it is females' business: they always watch carefully how it goes, where to turn, or what to carry… A black dress is okay as long as it is party attire. The main thing is that a person would not wear a black dress with the intention of turning the couple's life into a black life" (Informant #3); "Nobody wears black for a wedding; there is certain etiquette. The folk say you should not turn back, but it <happiness> does not depend on that" (Informant #4).

All the informants were especially proverbial when asked about the evil eye and the possibility that some evil powers would ruin the marital life of the couple. The priests treated those questions very seriously. Whatever was called superstitions before was now attributed to unseen powers and perceived as a real threat not only to health but to the life of the people: "There exists sorcery, black magic, as well as white magic, which is not better than the black one since magic is something not good in itself. The church condemns it all. It happens that people go to sorcerers, to witches if they want to ruin a marriage. It is a sin. Even when one wizard 'overturns' the magic of another he still spreads evil around himself. And the church teaches us to forgive. There exists blessed water against evil; just sprinkle it and the evil will vanish. There is also a prayer, and the reading of the Holy Scripture" (Informant #1); "There are people who can use all those things for sorcery even inside a church. There are people with different spiritual states and intentions… The church uses 'live water' and wizards use 'dead water.' They summon the devil's curse over that water and then use it. They also use water from washing the dead body, candles from funerals; they cross the path of the couple, even inside the church…The wizards use myriads of very different things: they bring nails, hair, poppy seeds, or dried frogs with them to the church. We never know what people bring in… Let's remember that these are people who wish the couple, not happiness, but misfortune. I always make sure nobody walks in front of the couple or puts anything under the *rushnyk*, or takes away their wedding candle. And the priest leads them <couple> out of the church. Even if someone will cross their path it will not harm them because the priest goes ahead with a cross and blessing…The priests instruct the couple to pay attention so that nobody cuts a piece off the wedding dress or the veil, or takes

away their wedding candle so that nothing would end up in strangers' hands. Because it is very important on a spiritual level. You'd better leave your wedding candle in the church so that it will burn down and there will be a guarantee it will not get to enemy hands. It can happen that someone's belonging (a picture or a shirt) is given to a wizard, and he tries to influence that person. And it depends only on him which way he will exert. Magic – it is serious. It is not just a game. By the same token the devil is not just a little demon from a fairy tale. It is very serious… <*Several minutes later, SK*> Superstitions negate faith. To go to sorcerers is… illogical. To believe in God and at the same time to believe in an egg-ceremony or incantations…it is illogical" (Informant #2); "There is evil in the world, jealousy, and hatred. These are all the manifestations of the devil's power. I do not reject that there are mean people. The only protection is to lead a faithful life. A Christian should not be afraid. Demons tremble before the cross. If I am with God, who is against me?! You should not be afraid of evil: to be cautious with it – yes, but to be afraid of it – no" (Informant #3); "Oh, there are such things connected to black magic that can harm the couple. <Mean people can> bury a *korovai* in the ground, can give them <the couple> some objects or take the wreaths away from them. There are different factors. Some girl maybe is offended by the groom and she desires to do evil; or there is someone who really is an expert in black magic. The only protection is faith in God" (Informant #4); "If God exists the devil also exists. It is as clear as the light of day. But who does evil does it to oneself. The main thing is that the couple loves each other and fears God. There is no stronger protection than confession and communion. And a cross must always be on the body. The couple is protected through blessing with the icons of the Savior and the

Mother of God for marital life. In addition, they are sprinkled with blessed water and poppy seeds, according to folk custom" (Informant #5).

Talking about the prohibited gifts, the priests, again, demonstrated a sort of scornfulness of folk beliefs. Probably there was nothing specified in the church books on that matter, therefore it was labeled as superstition: "I heard the baby's clothes are not recommended for gifts but I do not know why. When there will be a baby then they will present clothes for it" (Informant #1); "I heard the knives should not be presented. And the baby's clothes are not acceptable" (Informant #4).

All the informants were loudly wished children in front of the guests. They stated they did not know any ritual or verbal formulae for having a boy first. And yet they all postponed purchase of baby's clothes till after the birth, but motivated it differently: "We had a 'baby's set' and we bought everything else after the birth" (Informant #1); "What matters is spiritual preparation. To buy beforehand would not harm. People have… well, not a superstition but a belief that pregnancy can be terminated. I knew a couple who bought a cradle and toys before the birth, but instead had to put their baby in a coffin and all the toys there as well. Maybe that's why there exists such a precaution. There always will be some people who would say 'You see, you should not have bought anything before the birth' and thus will add to their pain. And the church calms that pain down. We must have faith. If a couple wants a boy first there are special medical calculations for that, and they are very successful. And a prayer can only reinforce this" (Informant #2); "It is not Christian to wish the couple either a boy or a girl. A prayer is justified only in a case when there are five boys already in the family. Then you can pray for the next baby to be a girl. It is not Christian but as a human I can understand such a situation. We

did not buy anything beforehand. There is everything you need now <in the shops>, besides we did not know the baby's sex, therefore we did not know clothes of which color to buy" (Informant #3); "For the future baby's sex you should pray to God" (Informant #4); "We did not collect much before the birth. There was no need. We did not care about the baby's sex. God blesses marriage with the children of either sex" (Informant #5).

Overall, even though the priests' world views were shaped similarly due to gender, special education, religious ideological values, and their work as spiritual leaders, each priest displayed an individualized attitude to folk beliefs relating "professional knowledge" to their own experience and worldly wisdom. They usually demonstrated good knowledge of folk beliefs first and then over-turned them as superstitions. In the course of their answers, however, the priests often did not notice any contradictions between their religious beliefs that they have adopted in seminaries and those folk beliefs they held as representatives of the same folk culture and which they assimilated long before they became spiritual leaders. They have been surrounded by folk beliefs which their parishioners brought to church; they tried to fight some of those, and they had to let some of those be.

Chapter 3: Elements of Magic at Contemporary Canadian- Ukrainian Weddings

3.1. Description of the Canadian-Ukrainian subgroups

Talking to Ukrainians in Canada about magic beliefs was not an easy task. It seemed that thousands of kilometers divided not only two continents geographically but reflected a huge gap between the beliefs systems of people historically rooted in the same culture. Asked to share recollection about their wedding days, informants often felt uncomfortable, in several cases even offended, by questions about good or bad luck. Thus, Informant #1 in the Rural group said with suspicion: "I am going to ask you after, what it is all about." In most cases they laughed at the questions with some degree of misunderstanding of how *all that* could be connected to their weddings. Soon after the beginning of the interviews, Canadian-Ukrainian informants started using the word 'superstition' and my repeated attempts to define what is good and what is bad were often perceived by them as inappropriate or strange. The scornful tone with which they pronounced the word 'superstition' and the falling intonation with which they quickly added "I never heard about anything like that" or "No, I do not know about that" manifested absence of any interest in magic beliefs and with this they closed the door to any further discussions.

The fact that beliefs and superstitions are viewed negatively is reflected in most of the interviews with Canadian Ukrainians. This fact, however, does not mean that they have no superstitious beliefs at all. Their minds, in this respect, are not a *tabula rasa* but somehow they wanted to present the "good Ukrainian" image which excludes magic.

Magic was to them something outdated, backward, something from "those ancient Ukrainian beliefs."

3.1.1 Rural group

The following chart provides information on Ukrainian informants living in the Canadian countryside. This and following tables, unlike previous four tables containing information on Ukrainian informants, includes a new, Generation, column. It shows how many generations some particular family has been living outside of Ukraine.

Table 5. Married Canadian-Ukrainian Village Informants

	Sex	Generation	DOB	DOM
Informant #1	F	2	1943	1964
Informant #2	F	3	1936	1955
Informant #3	F	2	1951	1974
Informant #4	F	3	1935	1954
Informant #5	F	2	1930	1949

The traditional Ukrainian village does not have a correspondence in Canada. Rural Ukrainians in Canada used to live on one-family farmsteads located half a mile from each other. They usually had occasions to see others during Sunday church services. There was more privacy in the farm life in Canada than in Ukraine with its densely populated villages located close to one another.

All five informants spoke English during the interviews and only Informant #3 who demonstrated more belief in magic swung between English and Ukrainian.

Out of five informants, only Informant #4 had a *korovai* at her wedding. The rest of the group unanimously stated that at the time they got married, this was not customary: "Not when I got married. *Korovai* started coming back…let's say 10-12 years ago" (Informant #1); "Somehow it was not done. In our area there were years – just like with Ukrainian dancing – that it was not done… That wasn't a trend for several years. It returned back somewhere in 1980s" (Informant #3); "It was a farm wedding, and at that time not too many had them. But our children had it" (Informant #5).

Knowledge of traditional folk symbols, however, did not depend on usage of certain objects at weddings. Informants who read books on Ukrainian culture were able to provide meaning of certain actions or objects even if they did not have them. Thus, Informant #4 could not explain the meaning of the *korovai* at her wedding and did not know any beliefs or omens connected to it or to the procedure of its baking: "I do not know. I thought a cake was more important." She ate her *korovai*. Informant #2 speculated that the *korovai* was "like a Ukrainian wedding cake. <They use it> for good luck, prosperity... I do not think there is a special procedure for baking *korovai.* Birds on *korovai* symbolize lots of children, prosperity, good health, green live periwinkle – for good luck, right?"[19] Informant #1 was more specific: "Dough is supposed to signify peace and happiness. The bread – because it is round and because it has a braid – it is an eternal thing, because there is no beginning and no end, it is for everything. A periwinkle is…

[19] The Informant had a *korovai* for her 50th anniversary of the wedding. That *korovaĭ* was dried out and preserved until it was overthrown from a shelf by a cat. Informant threw it to the garbage bin but did not see any omens in that event. Explaining her feelings about the accident she said: "I felt really bad because we were going to preserve it and that damn cat knocked it off."

customary. I do not know the meaning of that…" The reason for such extended knowledge is logical: Informant #1 is currently a *korovai*-maker. The fact that she was a widow did not seem to bother either her or her customers. The baking ritual itself was subjugated to the laws of the market economy: "I put 100 – my minimum is 100 – birds on it. Then I decorate it with flowers…It depends how the bride is going to use it. If she wants to eat or keep it then I treat it <the dough> differently. For if they want to keep it then I start a drying process…I have lots of *korovai* that did not turn out. It does not mean anything. The only thing it means is that I have to get another one baked. I do not throw it <the defective *korovai*> away. I eat it, it is good bread."

All informants got showered at their weddings but there were only two standard substances used: rice and confetti. Informants #1, #4, and #5 were unable to explain the meaning of the action: "I really do not know why they do it. It was something… that people just did. Now they don't because of the environment" (Informant #1); "Why showering? To wish you…I do not know…" (Informant #5) Informant #2 speculated it was done "for good luck" and Informant #3 connected the action with fertility: "Oh, it was just confetti. I heard about grains but at that time they did not have it. Why they did it? Fertility – that's what I was told. How it would be with confetti – I do not know. I think there should be some kind of seeds or <something> like almond candies."

Informants #1 and #5 did not have a *rushnyk* at their weddings; Informant #4 could not recall if she had one, but neither of them knew about its symbolism or about the belief of stepping first. Informant #2 said: "I am not sure why I stepped on it, but we did." Only Informant #3 knew and believed in the results of the action: "I had a white *rushnyk*, not like it came back several years ago, a cross-stitched one. We stepped on it. I heard

about 'who steps first" but the priest, who was from Ukraine, ordered: "<Step> together!" I believe in that! We stepped together and that's how it is! It's something!"

The question of contesting the dominant role caused very traditional answers in the informants of this group. They were quite similar to those provided by the Clergy Group in the previous chapter and testified to their inability to justify the action: "It is usually not one but two people who are the head. To predict? I do not believe <it>. It does not usually work" (Informant #1); "No, I can't predict <who will become the head of the family>. It was supposed to be a man but nowadays they are equal partners" (Informant #2); "We were told *he* must be the head" (Informant #3); "In olden days it always was a man, but nowadays…they are equal, each one has a job" (Informant #4); "How can we predict?! I do not think so" (Informant #5).

Informants #3 and #5 did not do any actions that would facilitate marriage of single people for various reasons. Informant #5 did not do it because her wedding and the festivities after were separated by a week long time span. Besides, she neither was sure about the meaning of the action, nor believed in its effect: "Why to toss? I do not understand it…I think, whoever catches it will be the next bride. I do not know... No! no, I do not believe in that." As for Informant #3, she considered the ritual alien to the Ukrainian tradition: "I did not want it! It was not *ours*!" The remaining three informants performed the action believing it was done for fun: "I did not know <why I tossed a bouquet>, because somebody told me to do it… Just for fun, I think. One who got it was very happy, but… what that means I do not know" (Informant #4); "The girl who caught the bouquet was supposed to be next to marry. No, I do not believe <it>" (Informant #1); "She who catches will be the first person to get married. I do not believe it. I did it

because it was customary" (Informant #2). In no case did a groom try to help his male friends get married.

The question about omens and their interpretation was met by informants with surprise; they were not particularly comfortable with the term 'omens' and immediately branded them 'superstitions': "Not to my knowledge. I do not know any of those traditions or signs. If there are any, I am not aware of them. We have to make our own lives; I do not believe in superstitions" (Informant #1); "It is a hard question…I guess love in your eyes <is the omen>... That's superstition that it <rain during the wedding> is bad! It was really raining and we have been happy for 50 years!" (Informant #2); "If there is <an omen> I did not hear and I did not know about it… I heard if it pours people will be rich but we can't control the weather" (Informant #4); "My mom said if it pours on the wedding day the couple will be rich. And I heard if the day is beautiful they will be merry. We had a perfect day… perfect weather for taking pictures outdoors, but when we came out from the church the wind took my veil off… You know, that was the locale with very strong winds…" (Informant #3); "The only thing I remember, they say that if the day is nice and sunny they <the couple> will be happy, and if it rains a little bit they will be rich. We had a beautiful day, and it was showering in the afternoon. Well, so far so good: 57 years" (Informant #5).

Informant #3 provided very interesting details of her wedding which she herself called "a very weird wedding": her hair-dresser from the city was late by an hour; there was no electricity in church because of the storm two days prior to the wedding and the guests were waiting an extra hour for the bride; when she with her aunts walked to the church, one of her aunts realized she forgot a kerchief, and it was prohibited to be in

church without it; when the priest was walking the couple around the tetrapod the guests did not smile and the Informant was wondering why they were so serious; when the priest asked them about the rings they found out that one ring was missing (it was found by the Informant's brother on a car seat later on); when she signed the register she had tears in her eyes; when she exited the church her veil was taken by the wind; and finally, her wedding gown was made *za pomanu*[20] by a lady who lost her daughter in a car accident. None of those circumstances was perceived by the Informant as some kind of omen predicting marital problems.

By the same token, informants in this group did not believe in non-material forces being able to ruin the marriage: "No, I do not believe it is possible. If you are getting in some kind of superstitions…I do not believe in them" (Informant #1); "Oh, I do not believe in that! <Repeats the phrase three times, SK> If you go to church and you say a prayer – you should believe in that <in church protection> (Informant #5); "I never heard <about it>... You know I do not even think it is possible" (Informant #4); "No, I do not think so. That's witchcraft, I do not believe in that. Witchcraft is what is written in books, and on television…No, I do not believe in that! We go to church every Sunday" (Informant #2). The only exception constituted Informant #3: "I believe it is possible. <People> may do something mean, cast the evil eye, can say something like a curse."

As might be expected, any questions about the evil eye as an active agent were quickly rejected by the informants as not worthy of discussion: "No, I do not believe in that" (Informant #1); "I do not believe in those things. Maybe my grandma believed, but

[20] The tradition of doing good deeds for the sake of the deceased relatives is quite widespread in Ukraine. In this case, the lady has sown the gown for the informant for free. The Informant's family, in return, should have commemorated her deceased daughter by praying for her soul.

not my parents" (Informant #4); "No, I do not believe in evil forces, evil eye. That's against my religion" (Informant #2).

Again, only Informant #3 expressed belief in the evil eye. She provided information on several means of protection for the couple that is second-hand, theoretical knowledge, learnt mostly from her mother and not through every day practice: "Yes, I believe in that... I know that you should take your wedding candles from the church and keep them. I heard about a safety pin, about something <worn> inside-out or upside-down... I did not wear anything <like that> at the wedding; we believed everything would be fine."

The questions about what was good or bad for a wedding, about actions to bring good luck, or taboos, caused contradicting answers. Informants rejeeted some of them as superstitions, but referred to others as traditions. A mixture of beliefs testifies that there is no consistency, not only across the group members, but even within the belief system of a single informant. A black dress for a wedding was unanimously considered fine: "No problem. Maybe she has lost her husband" (Informant #3); "It did not matter" (Informant #5); "I do not think anybody cares what they wear" (Informant #4); "It is superstition. You can wear anything you want here in Canada or North America. I have gone to a wedding in a black dress. It is only superstition" (Informant #2).

Hiding the wedding dress from the groom was evaluated differently as well: "They say it is bad luck, but I do not believe in that either. It is superstition" (Informant #2); "He did not see my dress. My mother told me not to show. But I do not know why" (Informant #4); "He bought the dress for me, and we have made it for 57 years!" (Informant #5); "I did not show my dress. No, you should not or else the life will not be happy. It is not good

<to show>, bad luck" (Informant #3); "I heard about it and we carried it out. It is a traditional thing. But there are people who see each other before they do wedding vows and have long happy life, so this again is superstition" (Informant #1).

Going back to something that has been forgotten was not seen as a bad omen by any of the informants and is best described by Informants #2 and #4 respectively: "Nothing would happen <if you return>. Absolutely nothing…spectacular will happen"; "If I have to come back I come back, and I do not think about it as bad luck."

Informants did not think about prohibited presents as messengers of bad luck: "They say you are not supposed to give knives for presents. But I think that's all superstition. I think we have got knives as a wedding gift. It is superstition. We have been married for fifty years! To present baby clothes? I never heard about it! Well, you do not know if the couple will have children. What if one of them is not fertile? It is not a bad sign <to present baby's clothes>, it just…it would be really a don't-gift" (Informant #2); "I do not think there is anything the guests should not present to the couple…I never heard about baby's clothes…For a wedding you do gifts like dishes, pots, money, whatever…But I never heard about anyone presenting clothes, especially for children" (Informant #1); "I never heard about any <prohibited gifts>. Baby's clothes? I do not see any reason for it" (Informant #5).

Again, only Informant #3 gave accounts of bad luck connected to the gifts: "A set of knives is possible but not a separate knife. It was not a good luck… because it is a weapon and could be used for bad things. Nothing was said against <presenting a mirror>, but if a mirror breaks they believe it is seven years of bad luck. Baby's clothes? No, it is

not a good time. If they present them beforehand God knows what will happen, and maybe nothing <good> will happen. Nothing before a baby is born!" (Informant #3).

Discovering the sex of future children and the celebration of their birth before it took place was articulated by this group in a way completely different from that of villagers from Ukraine: "I do not think that decision <influencing sex of future children> is yours. I think it is God's decision" (Informant #2); "You do not really think about children at that time. We bought a cradle, diapers, and little shirts beforehand. Maybe it is a good idea <not to buy beforehand> but somehow you see those things and you buy them" (Informant #4); "I do not know about any beliefs connected to the future children's sex. No, whatever happens - happens. It is in God's hands and not in anybody else's…To present children's clothes before the baby is born? Yes, there are baby showers <for that>" (Informant #1); "Baby's future sex <the sex of the future babies> does not matter. I have not heard about anything <to influence that>. I guess we bought things for the future baby. How would you bring the baby home?! We did not believe in that <as a bad sign>" (Informant #5).

Only Informant #3 was convinced otherwise: "I did not buy anything beforehand. Until the baby is born you must not <buy anything>."

Actions aimed at ensuring good luck were mostly referred to as tradition, as something nice to do, but that could be omitted without any consequences. For example, a custom of having 'something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue' in the bride attire mostly took place: "It is just another custom that was carried on. I think every bride does it. In my opinion, it is more of a fun thing. It is not something that is

going to affect my life" (Informant #1)[21]; "I tried to have it" (Informant #5); "Yes, I heard about it and I think I had it. It was a tradition and everybody said I had to <have it>. It was just for fun. Nothing would happen if I would not have it" (Informant #2). Informant #3 did not have it on purpose because "it is an Anglo thing. It is not *ours*. I did not do it!" Informant #4 on the other hand had heard about the custom only after her wedding. Females were not alone in their wish to ensure good luck: the husband of Informant #3 had "a silver dollar in each shoe for luck. Still keeps them." Actions for good luck were very circumstantial: "Oh, I put a penny in my shoe all the time, but only if I find it in the street... But I did not do it for the wedding. No, I didn't believe in that" (Informant #2).

Summarizing the responses of the group, it is possible to conclude that Ukrainian rural people in Canada still had many of the traditional beliefs. They of course were not as numerous as in villagers in Ukraine. It seemed that persistence of those beliefs depended to a large extent on the informants' parents. Thus, Informant #3 referred to her mother's words more often than anybody else and did not feel ashamed to admit she believed in what her mother taught her to believe in.

3.1.2 Urban group

The following table provides sociological information on Canadian Ukrainians who live in cities. Of those informants, only Informant #3 was born in Edmonton. The rest moved to Edmonton at some point from other cities.

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[21] There was a clear difference of how the informants perceived the questions. When asked about any known actions for happiness, the Informant replied: "You mean having a talisman or seeing an omen or something?.. No, I do not believe in any of that." But when she was asked about *anything for good luck*, she produced the answer above. This tendency was quite common for the whole Canadian-Ukrainian sample.

Table 6. Married Canadian-Ukrainian Urban Informants

	Sex	Generation	DOB	DOM
Informant #1	M	2	1947	1969
Informant #2	F	3	1936	1956
Informant #3	M	3	1964	1998
Informant #4	F	3	1974	2000
Informant #5	F	2	1930	1956

The further away from rural traditions, the shorter the answers of the informants about their beliefs were. Also the stronger was their desire to return back to those traditions, especially in representatives of the third generation. Oral tradition as a means of passing down information yielded to printed materials more and more.

Only Informant #2 did not have a *korovai* at her wedding because, as she explained, "at that time it was not used too much." For Informants #1 and #5, having a *korovai* was automatic and they had little awareness and little or no knowledge of its ritual symbolism: "I do not know who baked it. We had it because my wife wanted to have it. I do not really know any beliefs about it" (#1); "At that time I did not really know about it…The doves represent love or whatever…but I do not know too much about it" (#5). For Informant #3 and #4, on the contrary, having a *korovai* was a conscious decision directly related to their ethnic roots, and ritual bread itself was for them full of meaning. That meaning, however, had nothing to do with magic but ethnic identity: "It is a cultural tradition. It was a part of our Ukrainian upbringing. It was something I wanted more than a wedding cake… It <the *korovai*> is a symbol of marriage. Those doves and

crosses on it...it's symbolic of Christ disciples...it has kind of religious connotation" (#3); "It is part of the heritage and part of the tradition. I really want to keep that tradition in a family. I think it is a beautiful one...There are two doves representing me and the groom. There are small ones, they represent children. So, there were 50 of them...Periwinkle...I am not sure what this represents..." (#4) Such a different attitude probably resulted in different behavior towards a *korovai*: Informant #1 and #5 ate it, while Informant #3 and #4 did not: "We keep it for ourselves to look at" (#4). Nobody, however, knew about the traditional way of baking the *korovai* or its 'ability' to foretell a couple's marital life.

Informant #4 was the only one to not have showering at her wedding. She presented two main reasons for that: "Churches do not like it, and it was not something I particularly wanted, so...We <the couple> never asked them <relatives> to do it, we never gave them anything to shower us with." Informants #1 and #2 got showered with both rice and confetti, while Informant #3, and #5 with confetti only. Interpretation of the reasons for performing the ritual was different as well as its symbolic function: "I do not know...The older generation may know...Generally, it is a blessing" (Informant #1); "They do it to wish many years of happiness" (Informant #2); "It is for happy marriage, love, well-wishing, happiness, health...They do not really do it now because of the nature of people...because the priest does not like it on the steps because they have to vacuum it up. Besides, birds will come and he does not want them to choke" (Informant #3); "From what I know it is <done> to wish the couple good luck" (Informant #4); "I have no idea <why it is done>. I really do not know" (Informant #5).

Informant #1 did not have a *rushnyk* at his wedding and never heard about any beliefs connected to it. The rest of the informants never heard about the belief of ensuring superiority through stepping first on a *rushnyk*. They perceived the *rushnyk* and stepping on it differently: "It is a symbol of Ukrainian culture. A *rushnyk* is a holy symbol, it goes… to a passage of that sacrament" (Informant #3); "It is another custom at our church, and I think it is a beautiful one, and I wanted all the traditional elements in a church service to be present. I do not know any beliefs about it…I just know it <*rushnyk*> is a part of the wedding ceremony" (Informant #4); "Oh, I do not know why <we stepped> but we did so because that's the custom" (Informant #5).

Informants' reasoning about the possibility of becoming the head of the family was very rational and had nothing to do with divination of any kind: "I guess, it depends on personality: who is stronger" (Informant #1); "The husband is <the head>". It is just normal" (Informant #2); "In traditional times it always was a male. Now it is a shared position, they are becoming more equal, I guess…It depends who is a provider in a situation. Sometimes a male cannot be a provider, unable to work…" (Informant #3); "I do not care. As long as they get along – that's the main thing" (Informant #5).

Informant #5 did not toss anything to the unmarried girls at her wedding: "I do not think we did it at that time." As for the rest of the group, a new traditional element was present at their wedding, namely the groom tossing the garter of the bride to unmarried men, along with the bride tossing a bouquet to the girls. Not only did all the performers not believe in the possibility of their actions having magical results but many of them did not know the kind of the results that might be expected: "She threw her garter. It is <done> only for girls. Who caught was hoping she would be next to marry"

(Informant #1); "I threw my bouquet. It is just tradition. One who catches is supposed to be the next to marry. I do not believe in that. No, not totally" (Informant #2); "I threw her garter because everyone does it! It is sort of a Canadian tradition…no symbolic purpose" (Informant #3); "I do not think there is something like that in Ukrainian traditions. But this one is a tradition here in Canada, and I think it is kind of a fun one. To me, it is like a game: who is going to marry next, hopefully. But I do not believe in that <laughs>" (Informant #4).

In the informants' minds, there were no magic actions that could possibly help the couple love each other more or ensure their happiness in marriage; they strongly believed in reason and the human factor, stating they did not know any 'traditional' actions: "Basically, I believe there should be better teaching. I do not think the priests are doing their job teaching people properly…It would be nice if relatives would encourage <them> to trust in God" (Informant #1); "<Relatives> support in any way possible to be happy. If they are supporting your love and marriage, it is nice to see" (Informant #3); "They have to have love *before* the wedding. And the wedding day itself…There will be just fears whether it will be a great day or…not a great day" (Informant #4); "Wishing you good wishes and toasting you. Other than that – nothing" (Informant #5).

Similarly, the possibility of ruining a marriage existed, according to the informants, only on the level of the guests' behavior or manners, and thus protection for the couple should have been strengthened on that same level: "If a couple has love, if it takes the vows seriously then they are going to go through it. But there is nothing anyone can do to keep a marriage together" (Informant #1); "I do not know…It is possible <to ruin> but what <exactly> - I do not know... No, generally there is no need to protect <the

couple>" (Informant #2); "Some ex-individuals, past relations" (Informant #3); "If somebody would stand up to say some nasty stuff…pointing out previous boyfriends and girlfriends…It can be very embarrassing to the couple. But I have zero complaints about my wedding. Nobody did anything that could ruin it…I do not think it is necessary to protect them. But if there are very close friends who could handle a crisis situation that can just happen during the wedding – that's a nice thing" (Informant #4); "I have been to a wedding where a groom got into a fight with someone, and the bride was chasing around looking for him and could not find him. That's how <the wedding can be ruined>" (Informant #5).

Generally, informants of this group admitted believing in no kind of 'natural' omens. Interestingly, even the word 'omens' were understood by some of them in their own way: "Sure they <omens> are: if they <the couple> are serious it is quite likely their marriage will be alive" (Informant #1); "I've never heard about <omens>. Oh, maybe if it is raining you are supposed to have lots of happiness. And it was raining on our wedding all day" (Informant #2); "Marriage is supposed to last forever. I do not think there are any symbols or signs saying it would not" (Informant #3); "Omens? Yes, it is the overall tone of the wedding. You have that warm happy feeling or <else> the true essence – love – is not there. And the guests can feel it. I sensed that myself at other people's weddings" (Informant #4); "We had rain. But whether that meant anything we never thought of at that time" (Informant #5).

The question about influence of the evil eye and evil forces on marriage caused lively reaction probably because the informants could easily relate those notions to the concepts of their religions: "Evil spirits are there all the time. And that's why we have to

guard our thinking; we are to keep down our imagination… I believe in God: the Holy Spirit will help you make marriage successful" (Informant #1); "No, I do not believe <in the evil eye>" (Informant #2); "No, if you believe in God he is going to send you in the right direction" (Informant #3); "Not necessarily the evil eye but the devil in general can affect people's lives. We <the couple> should take responsibility for each other and keep our religion" (Informant #4); "I have never heard and never think about it" (Informant #5).

The questions about bad luck were rather harder for me than for my informants, who - despite my annoying persistence - could not locate them in wedding days. They denigrated them as foolish superstitions and denied being superstitious themselves: "I did not see my bride's wedding dress before the wedding. No, it is not a bad sign <to see it>…It is more romantic not to see" (Informant #1); "A black dress is not bad for a wedding…I do not know about signs of bad luck" (Informant #2); "Maybe in the past…I do not see that now. Black is very classic color for prestigious events…You can't see her <bride's> dress before the wedding. It is supposed to be a surprise. That's sort of traditional, right?... If we would forget something…life would not change dramatically" (Informant #3); "<Black dress is> not at all bad. Does not bother me. Just if someone would destroy the wedding, become totally drunk and obnoxious and embarrassing himself…Any kind of an embarrassment to anybody, especially to the bride and groom <would be bad luck>… If I forgot something…I would be a little concerned and upset, but…it would not be a bad sign, just 'oops, I've made a mistake' or whatever…But then I would just calm myself down…He did not see my dress. Not bad luck <if he would see it>, I just wanted it to be a big surprise" (Informant #4); <About a black dress>: "They

can wear whatever, it does not matter… I had it <a wedding dress> hidden in the bedroom but there wasn't anything bad <about seeing it>. I do not think there is something bad connected to it. It is just for surprise…" About forgetting something and necessity to return: "I never thought about it…Actually we do not have many superstitions like that, and we do not know about that. My mom and dad had something of that when they got married but they were different. When we married we moved nothing off them" (Informant #5).

Actions for good luck were explained by the informants as a sweet wedding tradition: "Anything for good luck? I do not know. It has never been brought up… I did that <having something old/new/borrowed/blue in attire>. It is just a tradition. If I would not do it, nothing would happen" (Informant #2); "For good luck? Lots of toasting!" (Informant #3); "Just a little bit of <old/new/borrowed/blue>: I had mine blue, I had something borrowed, I do not think I got something old, but everything else was new. I did it secretly, he did not know" (Informant #4); "I had 'old/new/borrowed/blue,' yes, even in 1956 I had that! Because it was something that brides did" (Informant #5).

In this group, the three older informants did not have a wedding registry for gifts since it was not customary at that time. Therefore, for younger informants there was a very little possibility of getting unwanted or unexpected gifts. They all, however, were struck by the question about what should not be presented at a wedding and especially if the baby's clothes can be given as a gift. Having heard nothing like that, they tried to reason logically and come to a conclusion on a spot. When informants were asked about the gifts that should not be presented at weddings, I got several unexpected references to their parents' beliefs: "You should not present something distasteful, jokeful gifts…It

<the wedding> is a serious thing…People never present things for children: some couples may not want to have children…no, no gifts for children!" (Informant #1); "I do not know <what should not be presented>…I do not think it is proper <to present children's clothes>. It is not a good taste" (Informant #2); "Giving a couple knives <is a bad gift>. But if you give them, there supposed to be money with it. I do not really know why. That's something my mom told me" (Informant #3); "The gift is the gift, they <the guests> give it from their hearts…I know my mom said: 'Never give knives.' She said it is bad luck or something like that, which I've never heard before… Children's clothes?.. That's very unusual, I have never heard of that before! That's really neat but I think you have to really know the couple…because there are couples that would not have children, it would be tough for those couples…" (Informant #4); "We got nice steak knives for a wedding present because we needed them. Nothing wrong <with it>…Children's clothes?! No, never! I would not even think of giving them because you do not know whether they are going to have kids. Some prefer rather career than children. So, you never, never present children's clothes!" (Informant #5)

Informants in this group have brought in a new custom that indicated a loss of the old Ukrainian tradition of wishing a couple children on a wedding day: "People do not verbalize the wish to have children. Maybe jokingly, but not on a wedding day" (Informant #3); "No-no! They wish you all the best, good luck but *never* children…It's not bad but it will come if comes. It's not a custom, I think" (Informant #5).

This question about future children and celebrating their birth before the real birth caused contradictory answers, some of which could be considered a sign of superstitiousness, if only informants themselves would not have stated otherwise: "The

baby shower is usually after <the baby is born>. My mom always said: 'Never before!' She apparently bought everything and my eldest brother lived only about a week. So she said: 'Never again' <before the birth>. It just seems to be a bad sign" (Informant #2); "Again, I heard from my mom it is not a good idea because…you do not know the sex of a child; that should make a difference. Is it a premonition of bad luck?.." (Informant #3); "I do not think it is a bad sign. I just do not think it would be a good idea. It would be very difficult if that lady came home without her baby. It is better to do it after a baby is born" (Informant #4); "We had the baby shower after <the birth>. I would never have one before because I would feel I want the baby to be safe…I am not superstitious but in a way I was afraid…I did not want anyone to make a shower before baby is born. I had a feeling for that…Besides, you do not know the sex of baby: which things to present…" (Informant #5)

Overall, informants from this urban group presented very contradictory beliefs but a nearly unanimous negative attitude towards Ukrainian magic beliefs, which were mostly unknown to them, but perceived as superstitions. Informants believed that nothing non-material, invisible, otherworldly could affect a wedding day or a marriage. For them, the wedding was an event where they – after long preparations - "wanted to relax and have a good time" (Informant #4).

One of the interesting observations on this group offered partial confirmation of Hansen's Law: the third generation of Ukrainian immigrants cared much more about their ethnic heritage. Informants #3 and #4 were probably the best examples of how the Law works: they purposefully organized their weddings using as many Ukrainian elements as they could. Informant #4 tried to make sure all those present would understand those

elements: "I wrote it <a wedding booklet> down because there were many non-Ukrainian guests, so that they would know what was going on. I have made a research before the wedding." Such research indicates that informants' knowledge is rather theoretical, unsupported by tradition itself. This knowledge of the traditional Ukrainian wedding ritual and elements is not (and cannot) be systematic since they live outside of the cultural terrain where that knowledge is common, and where magic is one of its components. They, however, pointed to the new traditions which are taking over the old ones. Thus, Informant #4 stated that trying to avoid the priests' ban on rice and confetti people started using bubbles more and more.

3.1.3. Divorced group

The following chart presents information on Canadian-Ukrainian informants who divorced after their first marriage. Both informants were city–dwellers.

Table 7. Canadian-Ukrainian Divorced Informants

	Sex	Generation	DOB	DOM
Informant #1	F	2	1947	1972
Informant #2	M	2	1937	1968

The fact that this group consists only of two informants did not mean that Ukrainians in Canada do not divorce. What it meant, however, was that Canadian Ukrainians did not want to talk about either divorce or the wedding that ended up in

divorce. Several other persons were approached personally or through others, and they refused to give interviews.

It is of course impossible to draw conclusions based on such sparse data but it is possible to speak about the tendency in terms of attitudes reigning in the realm of marriage-divorce. Canadian Ukrainians rely very much on personality, a strong intention to build a sturdy successful marriage, one's own will, and wedding vows as the best way to protect a marriage. In short, they rely on human and institutional pragmatics. Thus, the failure of a marriage becomes, in the eyes of the Western culture, rather a matter of human character flaws, of inability to maintain success, and probably of personal responsibility.

Both informants who were interviewed were quite knowledgeable about Ukrainian traditions, read about them and referred to those printed sources while answering. Both informants spoke Ukrainian during the interviews. They were very rational in their decision to have Ukrainian elements at their weddings: "In those years it was a conscious attempt to return back to the tradition, and <Canadian Ukrainians> looked for information. But later on it became a sort of market: there were lots of books in Ukrainian or English on how to arrange a traditional Ukrainian wedding" (Informant #2); "Before the wedding I was looking for <printed> sources" (Informant #1). Both informants tried to eliminate North American traditions from their weddings leaving instead only those practiced in the Ukrainian tradition.

Both informants had a *korovai* at their weddings for the same reason: "This is a Ukrainian tradition. We both wanted to have it <the *korovai*>. We wanted to follow the Ukrainian tradition and not to have an American wedding cake" (Informant #1); "We

were among those first couples who started having *korovai*. We demonstratively did not have a white wedding cake. We said <to ourselves> it must be a *korovai*. We consciously wanted to underline our tradition, our Self. We <as if> wanted to say: 'We are not like all others who have the white cakes.' Nowadays it became almost a must at the weddings of conscious Ukrainians. Those who do want to cultivate the tradition they have a *korovai*" (Informant #2).

Korovai symbolism, the ritual of its baking, and omens connected to it were known to the informants through the books they read, and yet they demonstrate different attitudes towards them: "It is a symbol of happiness, love. Each of its decorations has a special meaning…I know that the little birds on it symbolize children. Our *korovai* had two birds and one of them had broken off later. And I thought that maybe it had some bad meaning, maybe someone will die. And there were also two dough rings on it, and one ring was not fully connected…Nobody told me it might have some meaning…either that wedding would be ruined or one of them would die sooner…" (Informant #1); "I know it from the book only: there supposed to be seven females for baking; they must be happily married; they should take water from seven wells for making dough, and so on…I can imagine that there are different superstitions about it like, say, if the *korovai* is not fully baked then something can happen, etc. So what, our *korovai* turned out perfect but our marriage did not last long…" (Informant #2)

Both informants tried to preserve their *korovai* but succeeded only partially: "I have been keeping the upper layer of it, with the little birds and the rest... I did not know how to dry dough out correctly; it grew mould, and I had to throw it away" (Informant #1); "We tried to dry it out but we did not really succeed in that" (Informant #2).

Only Informant #1 was showered at her wedding, but both informants tried to provide their understanding of the ritual. It appears, in her attempt to avoid American wedding elements, Informant #1 did not realize that she was showered still neither with traditional Ukrainian substances nor by the traditional - for that ritual - figures: "We were showered by my little girl-students. I did not even know they were going to do that. It was a surprise! They did not use rice because it is an American tradition but rose petals. Why? It is an interesting question…I have to give my own interpretation since I have not read anything about it. <They did it> for me to have a beautiful life, because flowers are beautiful and have a nice smell." Informant #2 confessed that he had read a lot, that's why his answers were rather retranslation than guessing: "I think it <showering> must be connected with fertility. Just like those birdies on a *korovai* symbolize the number of children, showering someone with rice or rye or any other grain is a symbolical wishing for crops. Well, I have read too much about some things."

Both informants stepped on a *rushnyk* in church, both knew about the tradition of ensuring domination through stepping first, but neither believed that: "I do not know why to step… I can only guess…I would connect it to the beginning of a new life, but I do not know officially…I heard that who steps first will have more authority in marital life…I did not try to step first. I also know another belief: if her <bride's> veil covers his <groom's> shoes she will have more authority. But this is an American <belief>" (Informant #1); "This is a tradition and a part of the ritual. We, I think, stepped together because they believe the person who will step first will be the 'boss' in the family. I do not believe in that but I know about it" (Informant #2).

Informant #2 did not look upon the traditional beliefs seriously. When asked what other actions for ensuring superiority by the couple could be referred to real socio-historical circumstances: "Even at that time, in North America, people talked a lot about gender equality. It was not fashionable to do something that would ensure someone's superiority." Informant #1 was more comfortable with traditional beliefs and credited them with at least some sense (especially in later answers): "Maybe that who steps first will become the head of the family?.."

Informant #1 tossed a bouquet to the unmarried girls. She stated it was an American custom but 'less' American than tossing a garter by the groom which they did not do. Informant #2 did not perform any such action which he called a "divination to see who will marry next."

Informant #1 provided very interesting examples of what can be done to enhance the couple's happiness and love. In her answers, however, she tended to mix together logical and magical thinking: "There were many sweet cakes…so that love would be sweet…Father gave a speech, and it helps <to love more>, at least it helped me…Also they click glasses making the couple kiss but I do not know if that really helps them to love each other more…I wanted everyone to have a bouquet <on the attire>, and all of a sudden someone arrived and I did not have a bouquet for her…These are trifles, but they are important. It is important that nobody feels uncomfortable. Some people are very sensitive to these kinds of things, and you have to keep it in mind…When you invite people to the wedding, think carefully so as not to omit someone. It is important for the wedding that nobody be offended." Informant #2 stated that there was nothing done for the sake of the couple's happiness during the wedding, but when they returned to the

hotel, its owner, a Ukrainian, treated them with champagne and made them break the glasses. The latter shocked the bride who never heard about such a tradition: "We had drunk and thrown the glasses at all our might so that they would break into small pieces. For it is considered for happiness." He also has read in books about a ritual of ensuring the couple's happiness and love: "They <the couple> are treated with honey because it is sweet like their love and it is sticky so that their marriage would stick together; they are also given a golden coin to be rich; then an ear of grain to be wealthy; then a head of garlic to be healthy...after all, garlic is Ukrainian penicillin...and <helps> to defend against evil forces."

Speaking about omens, Informant #2 recalled his father's words about rain: "My father said that on the day of Elevation of Cross it always rains in Ukraine. He said we were lucky because the weather was perfect. Who knows, maybe if there had been rain we would still live together..."

Neither of the informants believed that the evil eye or some evil forces were capable of ruining marital life of the couple. For both of them, material, earthly causes were more powerful that otherworldly ones: "I do not believe in evil eye...You can be afraid of people who get drunk at the wedding. This would ruin it: a fight, the drunk...I do not believe that something that would happen at the wedding would ruin the couple's life. On the other hand, psychologically...If one family would quarrel with each other then it would have an influence <on the couple's life>" (Informant #1); "I do not believe in the evil eye. I have a degree in hard sciences, and I approach things empirically. Prove it to me, let's go to the lab and analyze it! That's why it is hard for me to believe that someone would come to the wedding, curse us, and it would ruin our life. It would ruin

our good mood, yes, but not our life. I do not know who would be able to evileye like that" (Informant #2).

Obviously, the actions of protection did not make sense in the informant's eyes. Here, however, a distinct difference between them becomes apparent: Informant #1 is religious and believes that God's protection is the best, while Informant #2 is an empiricist and for him the only thing that matters would be a precise following of the tradition: "I believe in God yet you have to really work hard to protect your marriage, to make it all good" (#1); "Whether I believe in the traditions or not does not matter. To protect…If I would know there is such folk ritual I would probably perform it. Not because I believe in it but because the folk do it. And it would be one more way to underline my Self, my Ukrainian Self. I would do it for the sake of that tradition. But whether I would believe in that or not – that would be secondary for me" (#2).

The informants rejected signs of good or bad luck as those from non-Ukrainian tradition: they did not hide the brides' dresses till the wedding day, or put coins for good luck in shoes, or had anything 'old, new, borrowed, and blue' in their attire, or considered returning back to be a bad thing. They both thought of children's clothes as just a tactless wedding gift that had nothing to do with summoning bad luck: "Not that it is a superstition, but it would be sort of <to announce that> the baby is on its way. It would be a hint that she is not a virgin any more" (Informant #2).

Only Informant #2 heard that knives were not good as gifts, but his justification was grounded in rational thinking: "I am guessing now: a knife is a dangerous object, it could be used as weapon. Why would you present somebody with weapon? This is just my guess…"

Even though both informants thought that a taboo on the baby-shower before the baby's birth was a superstition, their behavior at the time when they had their first-borns was different: "My mom told not to buy anything for the baby beforehand. There was such a belief that you should wait till the baby is born. It is rather a superstition, I would say. But we did not buy anything beforehand" (Informant #1); "We were well showered before the baby was born! We had received lots of things. It is quite practical and wise: you would not buy everything you need right after the birth. Yet I know that in some cultures it is considered to be a bad idea because you can sort of cast the evil eye on the baby" (Informant #2).

Summarizing material from this group, I would say that Canadian informants, unlike Ukrainian ones, did not attribute the failure of their marriages to anything supernatural that happened during their weddings. Their answers imply that they believed in personal responsibility for what happened rather than in supernatural intervention. They were very rational and thought logically, yet Informant #1 was more inclined to take into consideration various omens (like disconnected dough rings on her *korovai*) than Informant #2. It is possible to assume that gender differences as well as personal predispositions played a role.

Being very 'tradition-minded,' both informants took the best from the Ukrainian wedding tradition and rejected the rest, namely folk supernatural beliefs. Those elements they chose and used were discussed, researched, and well performed in front of the audience who might have no knowledge about Ukrainian wedding traditions. Each of them was aimed at making some statement, like the statement about one's own uniqueness, about one's Ukrainianness.

3.1.4. Clergy group

The following table presents information on the Canadian priests heading Ukrainian Churches in Edmonton. Similar to the Clergy group from the previous chapter, two main Ukrainian Churches are presented in this table: Ukrainian Orthodox and Ukrainian Greek-Catholic.

Table 8. Married Canadian-Ukrainian Priests

	Sex	Generation	Church	DOB	DOM
Informant #1	M	1	UOC	1948	1965
Informant #2	M	2	UGC	1944	1971
Informant #3	M	2	UGC	1950	1979

Key: UOC – Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada; UGC – Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

Although all three informants were priests in different churches in Edmonton they all were born outside of Canada but not in Ukraine either. They all were part of Ukrainian communities living in other countries. Informants #2 and #3 belonged to the Ukrainian-Catholic church, and Informant #1 to the Ukrainian Orthodox. Whether the differences in wedding elements they displayed can be attributed to different church denominations or to cultural assimilation in the locales where they used to dwell before coming to Canada is hard to determine with such a small sample. All three informants chose to speak Ukrainian during the interviews.

All three informants had a *korovai* at their weddings; in all cases they were made by relatives but only Informant #1 kept if after his wedding "till the mice ate it, it has

fallen apart." But unlike Informant #2 from the Rural group, the priest did not throw the *korovai* into the garbage: "I had burnt it…I do not know how it supposed to be according to the tradition, but as a priest I know that if we have anything blessed we must not throw it away. At that time, of course, I was not yet a priest but I knew if there was something important and no way to keep it, it would be better to burn it." The other two informants, according to the Ukrainian tradition, shared ritual bread and ate it with the guests.

None of the informants knew any omens connected to the *korovai* or the traditional ritual of baking. Explaining reasons for having a *korovai* and its symbolism they provided quite consistent answers: "This is our tradition. We need to keep it if possible because we are living abroad and all ours are getting lost. Younger generations do not know anything at all about how it was before… Bread is life" (Informant #1); "The couple is blessed with <this> bread and it means God's blessing, wealth" (Informant #2).

Only Informant #1 was showered with wheat and rice "for good crop, many children, and good life, for barns to be full in…This is from our old traditions when we used to live on farms. Nowadays they rather use confetti." Informant #2 was not showered because, as he stated, that was not a custom where he lived, while Informant #3 had to eliminate most joyful elements from his wedding due to the death of his father's brother right before the wedding.

Stepping on a *rushnyk* happened with Informant #1 only, again: "It was a must. They <the *rushnyky*, plural form> must have been embroidered and now they are hanging on the icons in our house." He, however, was unable to provide the symbolism of the ritual: "It is a good question… Back at that time it was our tradition, like "We do this!"

But nobody asked why we did…and nobody knew." The other two informants did not step on a *rushnyk* because Informant #2 simply did not have any *rushnyk* at his wedding, and Informant #3 stated that was not customary to step on a *rushnyk*, only to bind the hands with it. In his case, a modified version of the same magical action of acquiring domestic power can be recognized: "Well, people said whose hand is atop when the priest binds the couple's hands together would be a master of the house…But we never paid attention to that." Informant #1 never heard about ensuring domestic power through stepping first on a *rushnyk* ("I have never seen such a competition!"), but neither he nor Informant #3 believed that: "I know there are various superstitions…people do, and often those old ladies watch <them>" (Informant #3).

Their suggestions about what one can do to become the head of the family were very realistic and mostly based on the church canons: "Holy Scripture says a husband is the head of the family. Apostle Paul wrote about it. But Jesus Christ taught to <mutually> respect…I think now the couples have more sanity to avoid conflicts and act together instead of dictating: 'I am the head and you will obey'" (Informant #1); "Sometimes you can determine that <who will be the leader> from their character" (Informant #3).

None of the informants performed any actions to help their unmarried fellows marry sooner. The brides, however, did help their girlfriends at Informant #1 and #2's weddings, but the grooms did not believe in the results: "It is in the Canadian tradition to toss a bouquet. She who catches will be happy because she supposedly will marry next…Do I believe? E-e-eh, there is a tradition - let them follow it. I respect all the traditions" (Informant #1); "You see, I am a theologian. I deeply respect these simple folk beliefs but if they have anything to do with reality – it is another matter" (Informant #2).

The bride of Informant #3 had left her bouquet in the church under the icon of Mother of God due to the strained tone of the wedding even though the ritual itself did exist in their locale.

All informants were very critical about any actions ensuring happiness and enforcing the love of the couple. To them, they were borrowed from other cultures while for Ukrainians did nothing beyond the church wedding: "The most important thing is to say the vows, to listen to the Apostles' readings and Holy Testament…I do not know any traditions <for ensuring happiness>…<People> stick in traditions from everywhere. Says, I have seen it in Spain, or the USA, or somewhere else. And I tell them: 'Good people, but we have our own traditions!" (Informant #1); "Sounds like some magic…Maybe somewhere there are people who do such things…maybe there is really something, but I do not know because I am very much against such 'hocus-pocus'. I firmly believe in prayer. If the couple dedicate themselves to each other, then there will be a good result. But to get it through magic…I do not think so" (Informant #3).

Informants demonstrated the same skeptical attitude towards omens appearing on the wedding day and their usefulness for predicting anything whatsoever: "It is exactly like people say rain is a bad sign for a funeral. And I say to them: 'Good people, it is very good: sacred water will wash away everything.' I do not believe in any superstitions" (Informant #1); "I do not know…Toward to the end of our wedding it started pouring. People said the marriage would be blessed, fruitful…I never cared about that. Maybe it is rather psychologically…it influences our decisions later on and so on… auto-suggestion, you know" (Informant #2); "I heard such a superstition that if it rains <the couple> will be happy and blessed. But other people say: "Poor them, they must have sinned badly if it

pours." It is hard to say who is right. We had a very cold day, but it was sunny…I do not know" (Informant #3).

When talking about evil forces and their influence on marriage, informants left room for such a possibility, yet still were more comfortable with the idea of physical, human intrusion: "Theoretically, someone can come and say the couple cannot marry. That would certainly ruin the wedding…Satan does his work everywhere. But I always tell those who are concerned with such things: 'Do not trust superstitions, but keep in mind that Satan can harm you only if you let him" (Informant #1); "An ex-girlfriend can <ruin a wedding>. I heard she can put something on the church threshold. Exiting, the couple will step over that and become unhappy. I had such a case when I was marrying one couple in N, but somebody had noticed and threw that away…Evil forces harm through the hands of humans. I believe that some person can do nasty things to another, but…I believe that people can sow the seeds of evil, for example, by spreading gossip about her <bride> or him <groom>. But to believe that someone there on a crossroad boiled a blind mouse at midnight… I am sure that it will not affect their future happiness. But there are malignant people, they exist…" (Informant #2); "Oh, absolutely! It <ruining a marriage> is possible. If the couple would run short of something during the wedding, for example, food or wine, it would be just like a misfortune…for the rest of their lives…That image would follow them their whole life. And I truly believe that there are various witches or wizards. They do various hexing to people because it is inspired by the evil spirit, by the devil…And it is quite possible. But even parents can make trouble! For example, a mother does not like her daughter-in-law…I have seen that. People can do

scary things. They can pray for good, but can also curse and do various mean things" (Informant #3).

Obviously, the priests suggested there is only way for a couple to protect themselves and it has nothing to do with magic: "The best thing is to follow God's law… and protect yourself in this way" (Informant #1); "First of all, they <the couple> must protect themselves. It is like with a flu virus. There will be two persons on the same spot, and one will contract the virus but another one will not. You have to have the spiritual immune system against the evil forces through your own spiritual life and prayers. Jesus Christ said: 'Be with me and nobody will harm you" (Informant #3). And yet Informant #2 described and explained the meaning of a magical ritual his mother performed: "Mother met us <after the church wedding> in a sheep coat turned inside out, and treated us with *horilka* (Ukrainian word for vodka, SK). Why a turned inside out sheep coat? Maybe it has something to do with that <belief> that if you wear something on a wrong side nobody will evileye you. Probably this is <done> to turn away evil."

This group did not differ much from the previous ones in terms of attitude towards bad or good luck. Whatever they attributed to bad luck they called superstition; whatever they attributed to good luck was labeled as tradition: "Black dress is bad? No, this is a superstition…I consider this <to turn back as a sign of bad luck> a superstition. People always seek something negative: do not do this, this is bad…There is such a tradition for the groom not to see her wedding dress…I did not do anything for good luck. Good luck depends on how we live and treat each other and respect each other. That's what good luck depends on and not on a penny or even a dollar in a shoe" (Informant #1); "Generally, there is a belief that it is bad luck to turn back if you forgot

something. I personally do not believe in that at all. It has no influence over me. If I forget something, I go back no matter what… Here in Canada they have this tradition to hide the wedding dress from the groom. He may even try to enter the church as quickly as possible so that not to see her" (Informant #2); "All my family was in black because of my uncle's death, so what?.. I do not know anything about this belief <a taboo against turning back>…I did not do anything for good luck…Did I see my bride's wedding dress before the wedding? Not only have I seen it but I helped her make it!" (Informant #3)

None of the informants could think about any gifts that should not be presented at the wedding and none heard of clothes for future children as a possible wedding gift, i.e., they did not know about the belief that such a gift would bring bad luck. The priests called these superstitions. Informant #3's reaction to a taboo on presenting knives, however, was surprising: "I have never heard about that. It is good you have told me. I am often invited here to the weddings of Ukrainians from Ukraine, so I will know what not to present!"

As for the belief that celebrating a baby yet unborn summons bad luck upon the baby, only Informant #2 was familiar with it. His reasoning, however, is an example of how logical justification is attached to an essentially magical belief: "I heard one should not buy anything before the baby is born. We did not buy anything before our first-born. They said you should not. Why? You know, the baby might die, and when you will look <at all those gifts> it will cause you terrible pain." The rest of the informants never heard about such a belief and arranged baby-showers before the birth of their children, following the Western tradition.

Interestingly, Informants #2 and #3 articulated what constituted a tendency in Ukrainian villagers' thinking regarding sex of the future children: "I know that somehow most people wish you to have a boy. Well, there is sense in that because he is going to be the continuer of the line, while the girl goes away from the family, especially in a village" (Informant #2); "We were mostly wished to have a boy, a son. It is a tradition! <He is a> successor! Continuer of the family name!" (Informant #3)

In general, Canadian-Ukrainian priests demonstrated a tendency to perceive traditional folk magic beliefs as superstitions. In their answers, they appealed to published church sources and dogmas to support their disbelief. They tried to reason logically and stay above irrational folk traditions. Even they, however, were not completely free from at least some elements of those folk beliefs that are now included into the wedding ritual. Even more, they actively change that ritual by adding or subtracting elements. Thus, the priests explained that they did not permit showering of the couple because it created mess on the church yard: "Some would like to <have a shower>, but we do not allow it because someone has to clean that after. Those who clean protest... There was an Italian couple who wanted it badly, but I did not let them. I said they could do it in a hall…Some ask to shower with artificial rose pellets. I say: 'Ok, but only under one condition: you must guarantee that after the wedding you will clean them up. If they promise then, I will permit them" (Informant #3).

Chapter 4:

Dynamics of the Magic Belief Systems

The two different groups of the research sample - Ukrainian and Canadian - demonstrated two quantitatively (see Appendix B) but foremost qualitatively (see Appendix C) different attitudes towards traditional beliefs in supernatural, towards magic as such. The Ukrainian group presented numerous and varied beliefs among which beliefs in malign forces, taboos, bad luck, and a need for protection of the couple were the leading ones. The group tended to organize their behaviors at weddings according to magic rules; they spoke about many traditional magic elements performed at weddings, and provided examples of personal encounters with the magical. Traditional Ukrainian beliefs still are present - in different forms and different quantities – in the Canadian context but mostly on the level of theoretical knowledge either gained through the family narratives, from own parents, or through books, but not as personal experiences.

Cross-comparing of the groups (rural groups in Ukraine and Canada, urban groups, divorced groups, and clergy groups) gives a better picture of the belief systems within each of those social strata. Having an unrepresentative sample is a big obstacle for any kind of far-reaching conclusions since there are variations even within each separate group. Even separate individuals often demonstrate non-homogenious belief systems.

Ukrainian villagers provided a clear and convincing picture of what a magical world-view is like. For them, the world around them – both visible and invisible – was alive, animate, and they were engaged with it in different kinds of interactions. They were hyper-connected with both nature and other people, mostly villagers like themselves. For

them, magic was a function of life. They might not use the word 'magic' itself, but their answers testified how much they believed. Magic beliefs circulated in villages on the level of common knowledge, of something unquestioned that follows the villagers from birth to death. Interestingly, Ukrainian villagers seldom referred to their parents as a source of magical knowledge. Answers they provided started with either "I heard" or "I know" thus pointing to a wider cognitive field around them and either personal experience or that of "known others." Presumably, they internalized magic beliefs very early in life and those could be drawn from different sources: narratives about others' personal encounters with the world of the supernatural, readings, direct instructions given by adults or observation of their ritualistic behaviors, discussions with peers, fantasizing, etc. They not only knew about magic powers but - what is more important – believed in them: 222 out of 282 beliefs they expressed fell under "Total Belief" category (Appendix C). Switching from one topic to another, they presented different sorts of beliefs and numerous taboos.

With as small a rural group as I had, the data, nevertheless, showed no differences between eastern and western parts of Ukraine in terms of wedding magic practices and beliefs. Any village wedding was subjected to the unwritten rules and regulations of the ceremony. It usually lasted for at least two days, Saturday and Sunday, and in some regions might encompass the previous or following days. It invariably included not only the *korovai* baked by relatives or in association with other female villagers, but its sharing and eating. It also included the *rushnyk*; showering the couple with grains, candies, and coins; wishing children to the couple; actions for enhancing love in the couple, and protecting the bride and groom from the evil forces. Therefore, the village weddings structure was stable and followed known ethnographic sources closely.

In the Soviet times, even in villages, there was a ban on public church ceremonies of any kind: "*Kalachi* are exchanged when a couple exits the church, but we were school teachers: we could not have the church wedding" (Informant #1); "I had a '*komsomol*'-like wedding… In those days there were only <ZAHS> registrations <of weddings> and nowadays all <couples> have church weddings" (Informant #2); "I had to secretly baptize my son" (Informant #5). Despite this fact, the villagers were not anti- or a-religious, but their faith, it seems, never prevented them from believing in magic.

All Canadian-Ukrainian rural dwellers were married in churches. There were, however, differences between the church denominations that probably influenced the degree of believing. But what united the group was an implicit statement that their faith alone was enough to fight any misfortunes should they appear; their religion gave them the strength they needed to build their lives without any kinds of magic rituals: "I am Orthodox but we got married in the United Church. There was no Eastern Rite to it…Whatever happens, happens. It is in God's hands and not anybody else's" (Informant #1); "<For more love> you say wedding vows to one another, you promise to love and obey…No, I do not believe in that <possibility to ruin marriage>. We go to church every Sunday. That's against my religion…I have seen it <banquet games> only on TV. It does not go on in an Orthodox religion" (Informant #2); "We knelt down for our vows. It was a whole mass; it should be before the noon, at certain time…Oh, I do not believe in that <possibility to ruin a marriage>! If you go to church, and you say prayers you should believe in that" (Informant #5).

And yet they were much into believing in church and blessing magic: "Our parents blessed us with bread for good luck, happy marriage, prosperity, and healthy

children…Parents and grandparents give their blessings with bread and prayers…We got married on Tuesday because it was a Ukrainian holiday, St. Peter's Day. So, we chose that day to get married" (Informant #2); "We keep our wedding candles and we light them for some church holidays" (Informant #5).

Canadian-Ukrainian country people expressed their beliefs in the possibility of some actions for bringing good luck: "They keep it <the *korovai*> for good luck, I think. Forever… Birds on *korovai* symbolize lots of children, prosperity, good health, green live periwinkle – for good luck, right?" (Informant #2); "My husband had a silver coin in each shoe for luck" (Informant #3); "Parents blessed us for good luck and good health… I tried to have 'something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue' for good luck" (Informant #5).

They heard about some beliefs typical for Ukrainian weddings, but those they never heard of constituted a significantly larger proportion: the number of beliefs expressed by them was more than two times smaller than in Ukrainians, 45 vs. 100 (Appendix B). When they tried to explain beliefs, they looked for rational explanations, and they did not recognize any bad luck omens as Ukrainian villagers would: "I have lots of *korovai* that did not turn out. It does not mean anything. The only thing it means is that I have to get another one baked" (Informant #1, Canadian) vs. "If it does not turn out, rises and then settles, or cracks – the marital life of the couple will be bad" (Informant #5, Ukrainian); "Witchcraft is what is written in books, and on television…No, I do not believe in that! We go to church every Sunday" (Informant #2, Canadian) vs. "There are people who have the evil eye. Maybe they do not want to harm but they have such bad eyes… They can even ruin marriage…Maybe some girl loved the groom but he did not

marry her, then she can do something…she can go to the sorcerers" (Informant #2, Ukrainian).

Even though the Ukrainian urban group expressed half the beliefs of the rural one - 48 vs. 100 - they cited numerous omens, taboos, and provided examples of encounters with the world of supernatural able to ruin marital life of the couple. All that signified they were believers. There was no solid borderline between Ukrainian rural and urban surroundings in terms of magic beliefs and practices in general and wedding ones in particular, so that answers of this group echoed the ones of the previous group very much: "I do not know… I was told that if the couple sees each other <in wedding attire> before the wedding they will separate" (Informant #1); "I heard it is a bad omen to prepare for a baby's birth in advance… I did not do much preparation because my mom believes in all those omens, and she said she would do everything herself" (Informant #2); "I do not like to return back anyway… I heard if there is still a great need to return in the house, you have to look in the mirror in order to neutralize negative consequences…This veil is a good means of pacifying the crying baby when you have it. If it cries you just cover the cradle with your veil, and baby will calm down… You should not show your baby off till it turns a year old. Only after the first birthday is the human defensive aura formed, so, whether consciously or not people can ruin it before the baby is one year old" (Informant #3).

The Canadian-Ukrainian urban dwellers' attitudes differed significantly indicating their rejection of magic, or their negative beliefs: "Marriage is supposed to last forever. I do not think there are any symbols or signs saying it would not" (Informant #3); "If I forgot something…I would be a little concerned and upset, but…it would not be a bad

sign, just 'oops, I've made a mistake' or whatever…But then I would just calm myself down" (Informant #4).

Urban Ukrainians – like other Ukrainian subgroups - took the gift-issue at weddings and before the baby's birth seriously, and they were convinced there were certain gifts that possessed magical ability to generate unwanted or even fatal consequences: "Forks and knives must not be presented to a couple or lest they will live all their life 'on knives'" (Informant #1); "I wouldn't be happy to get knives, wrist watches or something connected to fire like a lighter. I heard about those objects, and I have examples from my own life that they caused separation with the people who presented them. But in this case <wedding> separation can happen between those to whom they are presented. So it is better to be overcautious. God helps the cautious… You must not celebrate the baby before its birth. I heard it is a bad omen" (Informant #3).

The opposite picture was received from Canadian-Ukrainians: "I do not know about signs of bad luck" (Informant #2); "Children's clothes?.. That's very unusual, I have never heard of that before! That's really neat but I think you have to really know the couple…because there are couples that would not have children, it would be tough for those couples…" (Informant #4)

Ukrainian urban dwellers actively tried to defend themselves from evil supernatural forces. It could be a church protection of some kind as well as magical protection: "I was blessed with an icon. Then I put my baptism cross on a safety pin and tied it to the hem of my dress… I do not know, probably there are some precise rules for that but I sincerely tried to do what my heart told me. In the morning, I washed my face with blessed water, prayed so that nothing bad would happen during the wedding, and to

have no bad thoughts…I am going to hang an icon above our entrance door and in order to protect your marriage…you should not let others enter your bedroom and especially sleep on your spousal bed…On some 'fine' spiritual level, you have to be alert all the time defending your marriage" (Informant #2).

Canadian urban dwellers, on the contrary, did not see any sense in some kind of protection on some 'fine spiritual level.' For them, the one given through the church ceremony was sufficient: "I believe in God: the Holy Spirit will help you make marriage successful" (Informant #1); "No, generally there is no need to protect <the couple>" (Informant #2); "I do not think it is necessary to protect them. But if there are very close friends who could handle a crisis situation that can just happen during the wedding – that's a nice thing" (Informant #4).

Probably the only topic that approximated beliefs of urban Ukrainians and Canadians was preparations for the baby's birth. Both groups expressed it was a better idea postpone the baby shower till after the actual birth. The difference between the groups, however, can be revealed through the reasons provided. Canadian group was more rational while Ukrainian group firmly believed that was a taboo: "We had a baby shower after <the birth>. I would never have one before because I would feel I want the baby to be safe…I am not superstitious but in a way I was afraid…I did not want anyone to make a shower before the baby is born. I had a feeling for that…Besides, you do not know sex of the baby: which things to present…" (Informant #5, Canadian); "I heard it is a bad omen to prepare for baby's birth in advance… I did not do much preparation because my mom believes in all those omens, and she said she would do everything herself" (Informant #2, Ukrainian).

It was more difficult to compare divorced informants from both countries because of the groups' quantitative unevenness. And yet their answers presented the situation with believing in magic, probably, best. For Ukrainian divorcees, it was undeniable that nature itself sent them omens foretelling their unhappy future marital lives and that something magical had happened at their weddings, some actions were performed by malicious people. In other words, the informants attributed the failure of their marriages to some 'witch-like' people who harmed them during their weddings. Applying Butler's words to the Ukrainian tradition, "personal misfortune or peculiar turn of events is attributed to the actions of a malevolent witch-figure, who thus becomes a means of explaining the inexplicable" (Butler, 1990, p.81). Canadian informants, on the contrary, had little belief that something otherworldly would interfere with their happiness. They felt their own strong desire and ability to lead their lives in a desirable direction was enough.

Sporadic questions to the married Canadian interviewees about their divorced friends showed that this topic was in fact a taboo in itself for discussions even between close friends: "We have never discussed that <what might cause divorce>" (Informant #2, urban group); "I do not think any of them <divorced friends> can relate it to the day of the wedding. It is sort of events that occur after the wedding…that makes marriage deteriorate" (Informant #3, urban group). Avoidance of discussions might indicate that a marriage that happened to be not successful was perceived as a personal failure, a stigma. In any case, Canadian informants rejected magic interpretations of marriage misfortunes.

The clergy groups from both countries presented opinions 'from another side of the debate': they were people of a very special profession that became a part of their Selves. Both groups tended to present the official church's rather than personal attitudes

towards folk beliefs. They referred to Holy Scriptures, cited the Bible, and mostly avoided using pronoun 'I' in the meaning of 'I as a person.' Instead, they used 'According to the Christianity rules...,' 'Church regards this as...,' or 'I as a priest think that...' The phrase, 'I as a priest think that...' signified an important phenomenon: because of the nature of their work, the priests associated themselves completely with their statuses thus dissociating themselves from the secular world. Such dissociation would imply overturning of all folk beliefs. To be a priest means to be, to a certain extent, liminal: priests are not ordinary citizens, who know little about church divinities or Christianity symbols, and yet they are not saintly figures detached from the real world and its needs. All priests in both groups were married and had children. They spent their childhood and youth among laypeople like themselves. In neither group were they immune to the folk beliefs, but the degree of believing and amount of beliefs differed. Interestingly, in both groups the number of beliefs expressed by the priests was half that of the villagers; and in Canadian-Ukrainian priests that number was in its turn half that of the Ukrainian clergy. It seemed that for Canadian-Ukrainian priests it was easier to reject folk beliefs than for Ukrainian ones. One of the reasons might be that they worked in a surrounding where beliefs in the supernatural were not appreciated, maintained, dealt with, or passed down. Ukrainian priests, on the contrary, provided examples of every day dealing with folk beliefs and people's fears connected to the world of supernatural. And those beliefs and fears were (and are) distinct, persistent, natural, and affect many (if not all) people. Moreover, the priests themselves were perceived by Ukrainians as magical individuals able to discuss and deal with black magic.

In both groups, the priests expressed their desire to keep wedding traditions. One noticeable difference between them was the motivation for doing so: Canadian priests wanted to keep them because they were *genuine Ukrainian* traditions, while for Ukrainian priests they must have been kept because they represented *old folkloric* traditions. Ukrainian priests used the formulae "The folk say/do this, but it is a superstition," while Canadian priests used somewhat different formulae: "Nobody says/does this, and this is a superstition."

Ukrainian priests had the *korovai*, *rushnyk*, and showering as mandatory traditional elements of their own weddings, and continued to perceive them as ancient rituals and sacred objects necessary to be performed in the present. All Canadian-Ukrainian priests had the *korovai* for their weddings but two out of three of them did not have showering and at the time of the interviews considered it an annoying redundant element of the wedding: "Some would like to <have a shower>, but we do not allow it because someone has to clean that after... Those who clean protest" (Informant #3, Canadian).

Both groups stated that the head of the family, according to Christian tradition, was the husband. But Ukrainian priests were familiar with the ritual of stepping on a *rushnyk* as a means of achieving dominant role in the family, and they had to deal with this superstition, as they call it, when they themselves blessed the young couples.

Both groups of priests admitted the existence of supernatural powers around them, and diabolical forces able to harm, ruin, or cause death. The difference, however, was based in probability: Canadian priests recognized - in theory - diabolical forces only in terms of their place within the Christian cosmology, while Ukrainian priests provided

detailed examples from their own every day practices of how exactly those forces acted, how they harmed, and what kinds of means they could use: "There are people who can use all those things for sorcery even inside a church. There are people with different spiritual states and intentions… The church uses 'live water' and wizards use 'dead water.' They summon the devil's curse over that water and then use it. They also use water from washing the dead body, candles from funerals; they cross the path of the couple, even inside the church…The wizards use myriads of things: they bring nails, hair, poppy seeds, or dried frogs with them to church. We never know what people bring in… Let's remember that these are people who wish the couple, not happiness, but misfortune" (Informant #2).

Both groups believed that church was a sacred place where God's laws ruled. And yet the difference between the groups was in their belief in regards to the outside world: Canadian priests did not believe that life outside of church was full of supernatural powers or dangers, while Ukrainian priests did: "Both priests and church-workers watch carefully so that everything would be efficient and proper. Therefore, it is improbable that someone would harm the couple in church. They are under the spiritual protection of God… The priests instruct the couple to pay attention so that nobody cuts a piece off the wedding dress or the veil, or takes away their wedding candle so as nothing would end up in strangers' hands…It happens that someone's belonging (a picture or a shirt) is given to a wizard, and he tries to influence that person. And it depends only on him which way he will exert. Magic – it is serious" (Informant #2, Ukrainian).

Both groups admitted to being non-superstitious. It was, however, clear that Ukrainian priests were (or at least tried to be) non-superstitious through knowing, yet

overcoming the initial "superstitious" beliefs, while Canadian priests did not know those beliefs in the first place which gave them freedom to not be superstitious: "The wedding candle has a certain meaning. Together with the icons and a rushnyk it is a mute witness of the wedding. You can take it with you from the church…but under the condition that it will not get into the hands of strangers… You'd better leave your wedding candle in the church so that it will burn down and there will be a guarantee it will not go into enemy hands." (Informant #2, Ukrainian) vs. "Some people do not want to have a wedding candle because it is somewhat dangerous, and then, you know, those candles can spot the floor in the church…" (Informant #2, Canadian). This general preoccupation of Canadian-Ukrainian priests with the cleanness and decency of the wedding ceremony seemed to exorcize any beliefs in magic that were so vivid in Ukrainian clergy.

Overall, twenty Ukrainian informants felt free and eager to talk about magic beliefs and practices, and they were precise in their definitions of magic objects, actions, formula, and persons. They explained their meanings and expressed their own magic beliefs in various ways and in various contexts, both connected to weddings and not ("The earlier you will inform others that you are pregnant, the earlier the baby will start speaking" (Informant #6, Urban group)). Their narratives were emotional and full of details revealing magic actions and portraying the relations of causality between magic and reality. They provided examples not only of prescriptions and taboos but consequences after violating a taboo and even subversion of the violated taboo. They at times gave rational explanation of the events but they always were accompanied with magical ones: "Maybe some girl loved that groom but he did not marry her, then she can

do something <to ruin the marriage>...she can go to sorcerers..." (Informant #2, rural group).

Overall, the Canadian-Ukrainian group had a very materialistic and rational worldview that can be called anti-magical: even though they did believe in and even performed some magic action, the prevailing custom was not to believe completely, to deny their importance or possible influence of any kind, i.e. the causality relations. Generally it appeared that to treat superstitions seriously meant to be weak, passive, and helpless. Those traits are not appreciated in Western culture. There were magical actions present at the Canadian-Ukrainian weddings, but very little belief in their magical power was expressed. Often, informants called those actions "tradition" and were unable to explain them.

The Canadian couple was the main 'script-writer' of its own wedding: a bride and groom decided what would be included or excluded from their wedding. Their overall attitude towards magic beliefs and actions was negative, and they demonstrated a tendency to disbelieve traditional Ukrainian wedding magic elements. Explanations they provided were always rational: only drunk guests, ex-girlfriends' or ex-boyfriends' gossip, or disappointed guests were able to spoil the wedding by upsetting the couple and leaving them bitter memories of that day; relatives should support the couple and help to make the day of the wedding successful through thinking over all the details ahead. There was an almost unanimous opinion that neither the evil eye nor anything "non-material" could destroy the marriage.

They wholeheartedly denied being superstitious. For them superstitions meant any actions or omens for predicting bad luck, but not directed towards achieving good luck.

Superstitions were viewed as something outdated and silly. If the couple performed some actions for good luck those were mostly actions from the Western wedding tradition (e.g., having 'something old, something new, something borrowed, and something blue' in bride's attire; hiding a bride's dress from a groom before a wedding ceremony, or tossing a garter by a groom). Those actions had three distinct characteristics: 1) they were performed for fun only, i.e., they were not treated seriously, 2) they could be skipped, omitted, or performed partially, and 3) they "worked" in one direction only, i.e., could not be converted into bad luck under any circumstances (if they were not performed, or if there were some problems while performing them). Ritual acts performed for good luck then were not called superstitions but "just a tradition," they became a game with a lost magical essence like bubbles for showering the couple.

Canadian Ukrainians living outside of the live folklore tradition of their mother-country gained their knowledge about folkloric elements used at weddings mainly through printed sources: "I read about some symbols on <the *korovai*> decoration. I read it, I just do not remember" (Informant #2, urban group); "There was something written in our bouquet about it <*rushnyk* symbolism>. I wrote it down: I have made a research before the wedding. But since then I have forgotten" (Informant #4, urban group); "First, you should learn <own> tradition. There is abundance of literature! But books should be in Ukrainian... And ask how many people from the second generation know Ukrainian…" (Informant #1, clergy group)

Such a "theoretical" stance explained why Canadian Ukrainians were sure that there were some beliefs on weddings unknown to them but worth learning: "If we would know there is such a part of the ritual that should be performed we would perform it, but

we did not know about it" (Informant #2, divorced group). It also explained that differentiation – to their minds - of the tradition-knower into a well-informed Canadian or 'authentic' Ukrainian ones: "There are few such people <who can explain the meaning of a ritual>. Maybe just those who know the tradition or those <who are> from Ukraine" (Informant #3, clergy group); "I do not even think I have ever been to a true Ukrainian wedding. It just does not happen here" (Informant #1, urban group). Again, it explaind the informants' attempts to verify the correctness of information on wedding rituals or objects they possessed through the "authentic" interviewer by asking "Is that right?" And finally it explained why the informants synthesized all known categories while providing the meaning of some magic ritual or object: "Birds on *korovai* symbolize lots of children, prosperity, good health, green live periwinkle for good luck, right?" (Informant #2, rural group); "It <showering the couple> is for happy marriage, love, well-wishing, happiness, health" (Informant #3, urban group).

There are numerous factors that influenced that world-view differentiation of Ukrainians in Ukraine and Canada. Bianko (1974), Klymasz (1992), Sklute (1971), and Smidchens (1990) wrote about a close connection between security (both economical and psychological) and abandoning magical beliefs. Nowadays people in the West experience relative economic security but at the same time they face social dilemmas not previously experienced. Maybe this fact explains why Western culture is still full of magic beliefs promoted through the mass-media. It may also explain the New Age movement of the late twentieth century that engulfed first of all educated people as if turning them back to the religion and nature, spirituality, metaphysics, and folk customs, to beliefs as forms of alternative knowledge (Brady (Ed.), 2001, p. 10). At the same time, it seems that beliefs in

magic cannot disappear completely because the human history of "believing" and "practicing" is very long and spread all over the world like that of the evil eye beliefs (Dundes (Ed.), 1984).

Another factor might be religious life of the community as a whole and its separate members. Canadian Ukrainians were free to visit churches and to choose churches to be affiliated with. Some of the informants became Protestants or have close contacts with them. And protestant religion strongly suppresses any beliefs in magic, diabolical forces, or in omens, because they summon demons. It postulates strong faith, God's protection along with human's strength and self-confidence which is a typical Western attitude. Generally, Ukrainian churches in Canada became rather social than religious or political institutions where – even in the cities – most members know each other.

Klymasz (1992) found that disappearance of magical beliefs from Canadian-Ukrainian context was a sign of deterioration of the whole Old Country cultural complex per se. He described changes in the Ukrainian folk tradition within East Central Alberta from 1892 through 1930:

> a high degree of eclecticism that draws on the new environment as well as the Old Country tradition which, in every case, had become removed, unseen or not experienced in situ; whatever was retained in the old heritage appears to be of an ornamental nature, an external and symbolic extract (such as *pysanky*, ritual foods, Christmas tree) that focuses on the formalities of act and object rather than meaning and context. These were the beginnings of processes that were entrenched and crystallized in later years and reached their apogee after World War Two (p. 115).

Western culture dictated its own values and beliefs, modern and convenient, while Ukrainian magic did not go in line with them. The sphere of possible "application" of

magic and magical interpretation of events at the Ukrainian weddings became more narrow: the *korovai* was baked without any "fortune-telling," a couple was not showered, a possibility of getting a "wrong" gift was almost nil because of the gift-registry, etc. Ukrainian immigrants alienated from the "old-fashioned" traditions, drifted away from them towards "civilized" Western norms of life. What came later (a return back to original traditions) was a conscious and rational decision based on desire to stand out in a multiethnic Canadian background, to keep Ukrainianness.

Conclusions

In my research I have concentrated on comparing magic actions and artifacts used during weddings by Ukrainians on two different geographical terrains. The results show that the two groups represent two different world views: magical in Ukrainians from Ukraine and anti-magical or empirical in Canadian Ukrainians. There is obvious incongruity between those two world views. For the latter, magical tradition has little or no relevance for their contemporary lives; and as Butler (1990) put it, "a tradition holding little relevance for the contemporary community culture would ... be subject to very limited performance and circulation among the population" (p. 92). For the Ukrainians, on the contrary, magic is unrestricted, full of meaning and is at the basis for interpreting life events. For Canadian Ukrainians there is a conflict between simultaneously believing in God and in magical powers, while for Ukrainians, such conflict is mostly non-existent. In Canada, there are social and experience-related restrictions on discussions of magic beliefs and practices, while in Ukraine magic is a widely accepted phenomenon recognized even by priests. It is both discussed and performed in a public context, while in Canadian Ukrainians – if they express some beliefs or knowledge of the magical tradition – this tradition is restricted to their immediate family. Ukrainians tend to establish magical interpretations of events because they believe in them, while Canadian Ukrainians tend toward disbelief or ridicule of such interpretations. They thus deny the magical world view these interpretations represent. Their empirical world view makes them rationalize magical elements in the wedding context. For Canadian Ukrainians, magic is presumably something from the vanished past when uneducated people had no

other means to explain the world around them; for Ukrainians magic is very much about the present. The limited sample used for this study still demonstrates that the magic beliefs of both separate individuals and of groups are within the spectrum described above. Their acceptance of certain magic elements and interpretation of supernatural experiences as true ones are flexible but it was highly unusual for one interviewee to experience the whole spectrum of beliefs, i.e., totally accept some magic belief while totally rejecting another. Using Butler's (1990) classification of group acceptance of supernatural tradition (p. 98), the Ukrainian group presented beliefs and their acceptance ranging from total belief (acceptance) to marginal belief (uncertainty), while the Canadian group tended to fall into the continuum section ranging from uncertainty to negative belief (total rejection).

Therefore, I conclude that the magic tradition in general, and its expression at Canadian-Ukrainian weddings in particular have not disappeared completely; rather they became just a survival, a pale remnant of that rich Ukrainian tradition that is still alive and thriving in Ukraine. In Canada, magic tradition has been degenerating, both in terms of belief and belief expression.

In the wedding context, ritual acts and sacred artifacts perform different functions for Ukrainians and Canadian Ukrainians. In Canada, they are very much interwoven into ethnic identity issues, thus performing an ornamental function for conscious Ukrainian identity objectification. Belief in their initial magical qualities, however, is no longer current in Canada, unlike Ukraine. In Ukraine, all three magic components (ritual acts, oral utterances, and sacred artifacts) bear the function of "prescriptive cultural rules for

behaviour which are designed to maximize the positive results and minimize the negative factors" (Butler, p. 83).

I have confirmed my hypothesis in the course of this research: Ukrainian immigrants in Canada, due to various factors, tend to use positive or negative magic during the weddings significantly less (if ever), they pay less attention to and know less about the meaning of originally magical rituals used at a wedding. Most of the Canadian-Ukrainian informants have never been exposed to the oral tradition conveying knowledge about magical objects, individuals, or actions. Some informants were familiar with certain magical beliefs, but were unable to elaborate on their expressions as own experiences.

The traditional Ukrainian wedding complex in Canada has been experiencing changes and losses: the ritual of making a gate from a *rushnyk* and a *korovai* disappeared as well as sharing of the *korovai*, or showering of the couple; bridal showers became social events that take place not on the eve of the wedding but long before it. Some rituals like *korovai* baking or having a boy sit in a bride's lap are unknown. And yet other traditions are re-introduced and accented. Thus, the revival of the tradition of having a *korovai* for the wedding is relatively recent, after being discontinued for several decades. On the other hand, some new wedding traditions appear and are now held as traditional (e.g., preserving a wedding *korovai,* having certain elements in the wedding attire, or hiding a bride's wedding dress from a groom). According to Bogatyrev (1998 [1929]), this is the natural way of things since "new rites and magical actions are always being created" (p. 15). This remains true for both groups in the sample, and yet the Ukrainian

group seemed to be more conservative in terms of the creation of new wedding magical elements.

Ukrainian traditional wedding rituals used in the Canadian weddings do not constitute a single logical unit. They are quite fragmented and their elements are pre-selected by the couples according to the principle "The best from Ukraine." Weddings of Ukrainians in Canada are mainly designed according to Western standards. They may or may not contain Ukrainian elements. If they do, their main function is to underline one's marked status, i.e., to underline one's belonging to a different, Ukrainian culture within a multicultural surrounding, to make a statement about one's Ukrainian heritage accompanied by a conscious desire to preserve it. This is especially true for the informants belonging to the third generation of immigrants. As if confirming Hansen's Law they stated: "It is part of the heritage and part of the tradition. I really want to keep that tradition in a family" (Informant #4, urban group). Similar statements, however, were found in representatives of the second generation: "If I would know there is such folk ritual I would probably perform it. Not because I believe in it but because the folk do it. And it would be one more way to underline my Self, my Ukrainian Self. I would do it for the sake of that tradition. But whether I would believe in that or not – that would be secondary for me" (Informant #2, divorced group). This does not mean the Hansen's Law errs, but such statements probably indicate that there was no 'return' of the individual and family interest to the tradition; it was maintained from the very beginning. After all, the reasons for immigration in the informants' families could be very different, just like the attitudes towards own heritage.

Ukrainian magical rituals, if performed by Canadian Ukrainians, are performed for amusement and are not considered as having an effect (either positive or negative) while beliefs in the supernatural are viewed as superstitions and thus as archaic and undesirable in Canadian (Western) culture. It is apparent that Canadian Ukrainians, unlike Ukrainians, have little or no fear of negative consequences if they break a taboo or do not perform, or perform only partially, some magical action. The symbolic meaning of the magical actions is not relevant to their social world any more, it is not central to their ethnic identity. At the same time they do believe in luck. That means Canadian Ukrainians do not associate social boundaries with Power and danger. And such associations, according to Douglas (1982), always exist in closed groups, and lead to ritualism as such (p. 14). Strict social boundaries (i.e., closed communities) make an individual oriented towards external signs or symbols; make magic important for her or him (Douglas, p.17). Perhaps this is why Ukrainian informants from villages, living within very strict social boundaries, were the most knowledgeable about magic and expressions of magical rituals among the other groups in my research. Magic as a system of control is not needed in Canada because, as Douglas states, "here, it is the inner experience that counts. Rituals are for social interactions" (p.144).

Traditional Ukrainian wedding elements are emphasized in Canada through visual means, on the level of physical objects and vivid actions. They serve an ornamental function and reflect theoretical knowledge of the couple about Ukrainian wedding tradition and thus lack their inner, originally magical, essence. Canadian-Ukrainian weddings have become a "staged art," a learned tradition where every step and element are precisely thought through and – if necessary - verified through books since "tradition

competence" is not live. The number and quality of those elements and steps depend upon adherence of the couple to Ukrainian traditions. But even if their number is impressive, magic nevertheless cannot be "staged," and thus simply disappears.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

1. Did you have a *korovai* for your wedding? Where and how was it baked? Why did you use a *korovai*? Do you know what is *korovai* done for? Do you know any beliefs connected to *korovai*? Did you cut it and eat?

2. Was there a showering of the couple at your wedding? When? What was thrown? Who was throwing that? What is it done for? Is there any phrase used while sprinkling?

3. Did you step on *rushnyk* in church? Why is that done? Do you know any beliefs connected to *rushnyk*?

4. Can you predict who will become the head of the family? Is there anything the bride or the groom can do during the wedding to become the head?

5. Did you toss anything to the group of girls at your wedding? What was that? What is that done for? Does the groom do something for the unmarried men on the wedding?

6. Is it possible to do something during the wedding in order for the couple to love each other more? What?

7. Are there any special signs/omens during the wedding that would let people conclude that the couple will be living happily (or vice verse)?

8. Is there anything special the couple or relatives should do during the wedding to help the couple be happy? Is there anything they should not do or should be careful about?

9. Do you think somebody can do something during the wedding that will affect (ruin) family life of the couple? How? Is it possible to protect the couple from that? How?

10. Is there anything the couple can do to ensure they will have children of definite sex? Have you heard about beliefs connected to the sex of the future child? Do the guests wish children to the couple?

11. Do you believe in evil forces, evil eye? Are they able to affect marriage?

12. Is it bad when somebody comes to the wedding in a black dress? May the groom see the bride's dress before the wedding? What did you do for luck? What can happen if something was forgotten (missed), broken, or stolen during the wedding?

13. Did you order the gifts for your wedding? Is there anything the guests should not present to the couple as a gift? If yes – why? Can you present children's clothes as a gift?

14. Did you celebrate/buy things for your first baby before it was born?

Appendix B

Table 9. Distribution of Magic Beliefs/Experiences by the Subgroups

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
UV																			
UUr	GE		1	2			1	1	3	1	2	1	2	3		6		2	25
	FE																		0
	PE		3	1	2		2	1	1	3	3	2	1		2			2	23
UD																			
UClg	GE	1	1	1				2		1	5	2	6	5	5	3		3	35
	FE																		0
	PE		3	2		2	4	1	1		1							1	15
CV																			
CUr	GE							1	3			4		4	2			1	15
	FE															2		2	4
	PE						4	1		2								1	8
CD																			
CClg	GE		1	2			1	1	2	1			3	1	2	1		3	18
	FE																		0
	PE		1		1		2	2				1		1					8

Key:

Magic Experiences

GE – Generalized Experience

FE – Family Experience

PE – Personal Experience

Subgroups

UV – Ukrainian Village Informants

UUr – Ukrainian Urban Informants

UD – Ukrainian Divorced Informants

UClg – Ukrainian Clergy

CV – Canadian-Ukrainian Village Informants

CUr – Canadian-Ukrainian Urban Informants

CD – Canadian-Ukrainian Divorced Informants

CClg – Canadian-Ukrainian Clergy

Magic Beliefs

1 – *Korovai* baking as a divination act

2 – Showering the couple for ensuring well-being

3 – Stepping first on a *rushnyk* to become the head of the family

4 – Other means of becoming the head

5 – Enhancing love of the couple

6 – Facilitating marriage of others

7 – Signs forerunning good luck

8 – Signs forerunning bad luck

9 – Influencing good luck

10 – Taboos for the wedding day

11 – Evil eye

12 – Black magic

13 – Ruining marriage

14 – Protection of the couple

15 – Belief in prohibited gifts

16 – Influencing future child's sex

17 – Prohibition on the baby shower

Appendix C

Table 10. Magic Beliefs Acceptance by the Sample Groups

Group		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Ukrainian Group	TB	3	13	8	4	2	5	8	26	16	28	12	14	21	16	31		13	222
	MB	1	3	1	1	5	4	2	2	3	2	1		1		5		5	36
	TR		2	5			5		3	2	4				1	1		1	24
Totals		**4**	**18**	**14**	**5**	**7**	**14**	**10**	**31**	**21**	**34**	**13**	**14**	**22**	**17**	**37**		**19**	**282**
Canadian Group	TB	1								1	1	1	2	1		2		3	12
	MB	3					2	8		6		1		2	2	3		2	29
	TR	1	2	4	4	1	10	2	6	5	7	5	3	9	6	2		7	84
Totals		**5**	**2**	**4**	**4**	**1**	**12**	**10**	**6**	**12**	**8**	**7**	**5**	**12**	**8**	**7**		**12**	**125**

Key:

Beliefs Acceptance Categories

TB – Total Belief

MB – Marginal Belief

TR – Total Rejection

Magic beliefs

1-17 – See the list for Appendix B